JANUARY.

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THE CAPTAIN

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EDITOR, "THE OLD FAG." ATHLETIC EDITOR C.B.FRY.

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Vol. XII. No. 70. JANUARY, 1905.

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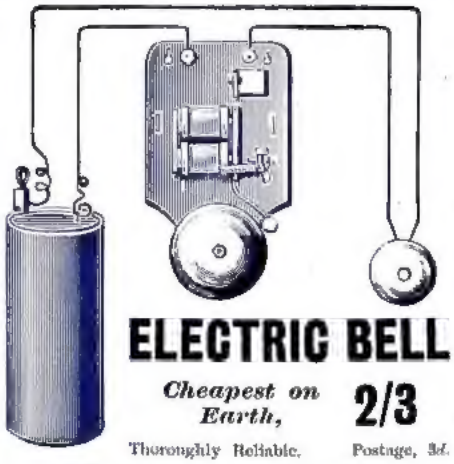

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For January

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THE RAID OF THE RHINOCEROSES, which is an account of an out-of-the-way adventure in East Africa.

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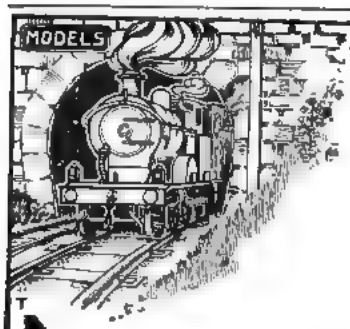

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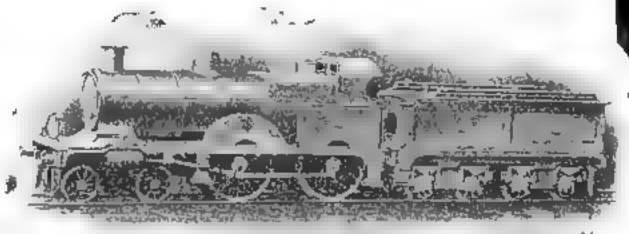

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"CAPTAIN" PRIZES.

If you want to win any of these Prizes, see page 376.

See "A January Event," If you want to win one of these Footballs by Messrs. A. W. Gamage, Ltd.

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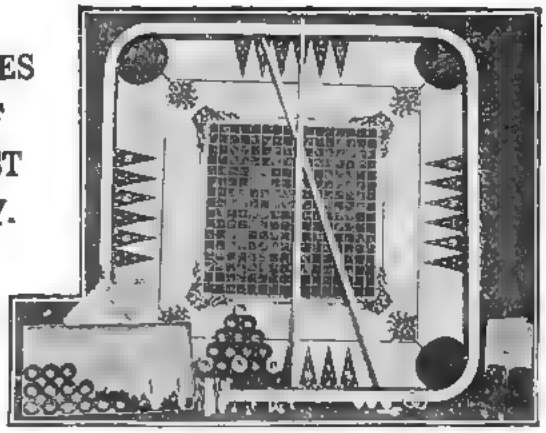
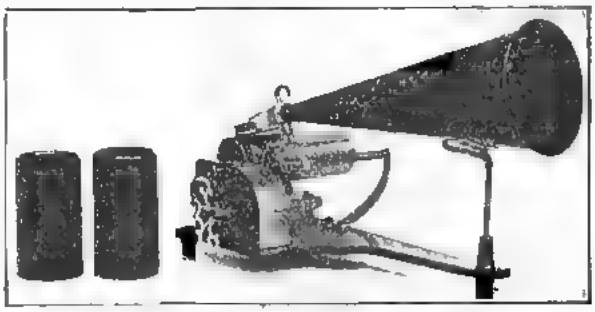
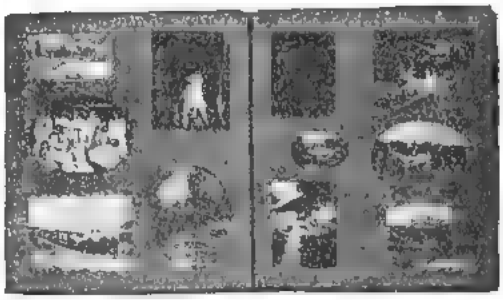


This "De Luxe" Crown Combination Game Board, value £1, is awarded in Competition No. 5, "Hidden Advertisers."



This New Columbia Cramophone is awarded in Class I. Competition No. 2. See page 376.

"JOHN PIGGOTT" HOCKEY STICKS, AND VALUABLE BOOKS, are also awarded to Competitors.



See "Photographic Competition," If you want this "Sunny Memories" Album.

See Competition No. 2, "Captain Birthday Book," if you want a set of these Grip Dumb-bells.

This 10/6 "Swan" Fountain Pen is awarded in Class I. of "A January Event." See page 376.

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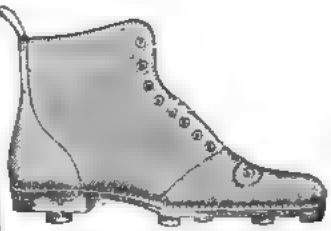

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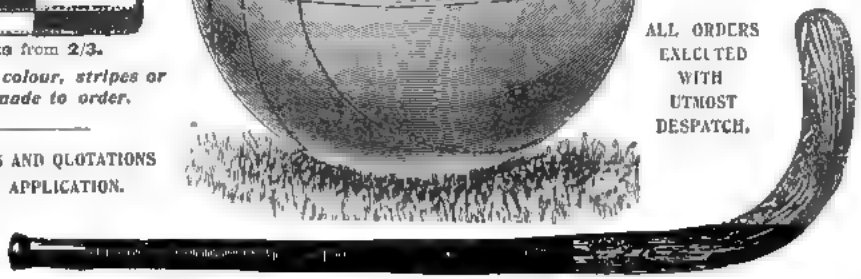

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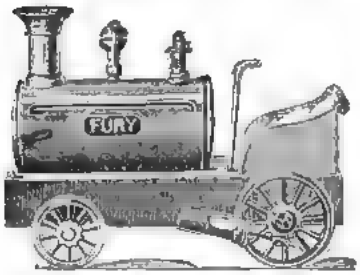

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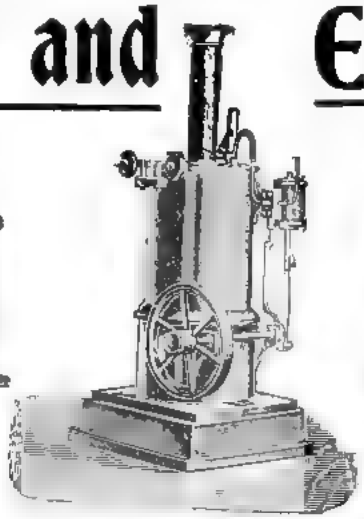

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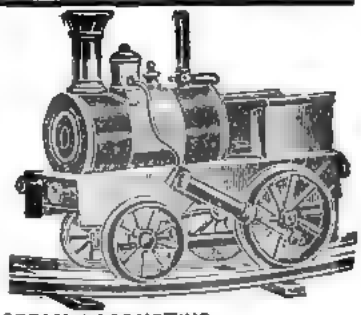

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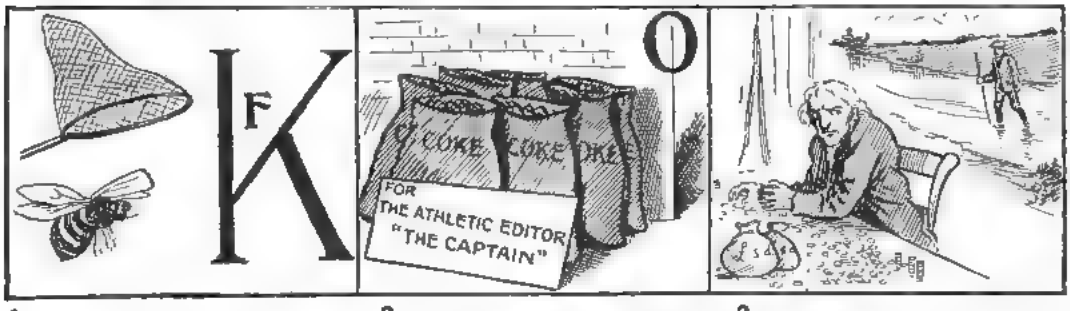

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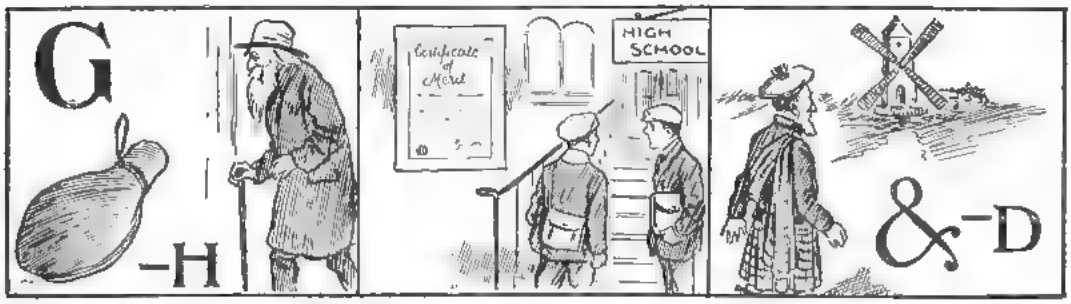

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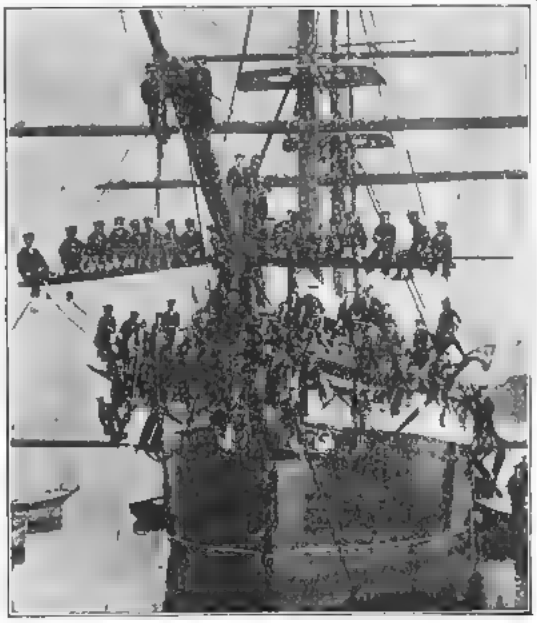

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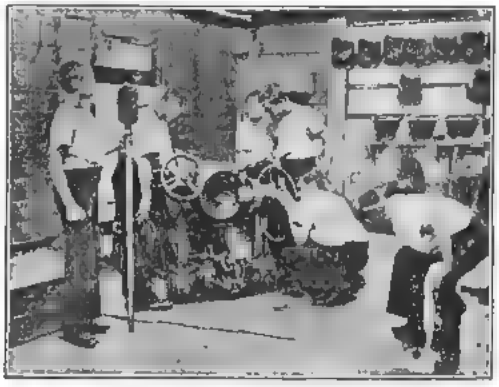

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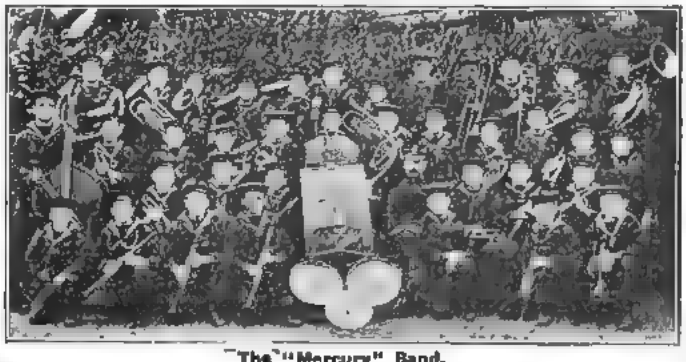

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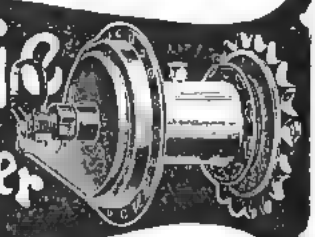

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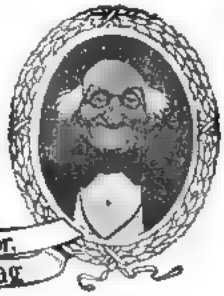

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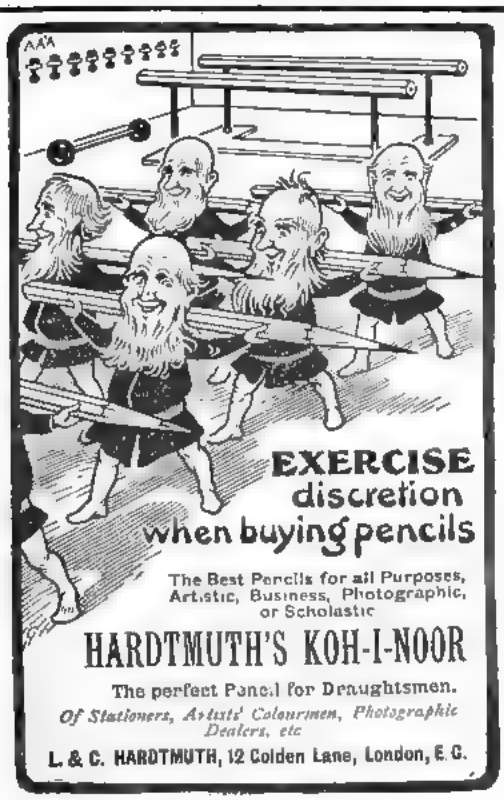

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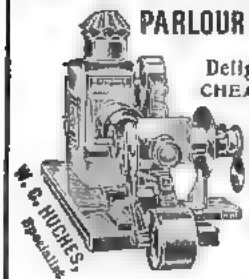

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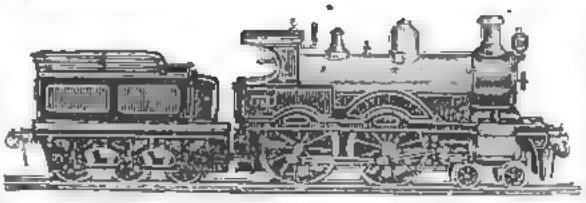

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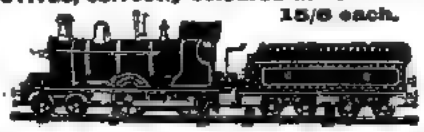

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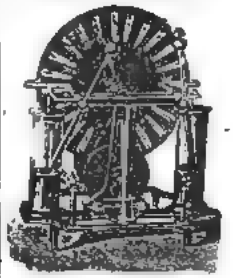

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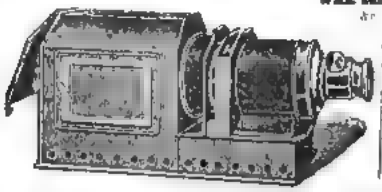

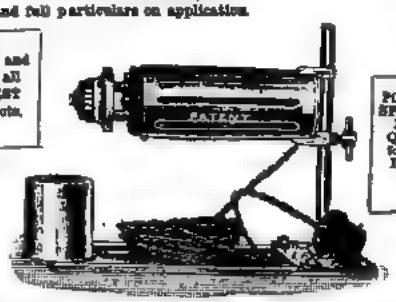

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10. W. Rhodes. 11. R. Abel. 12. S. M. J. Woods.

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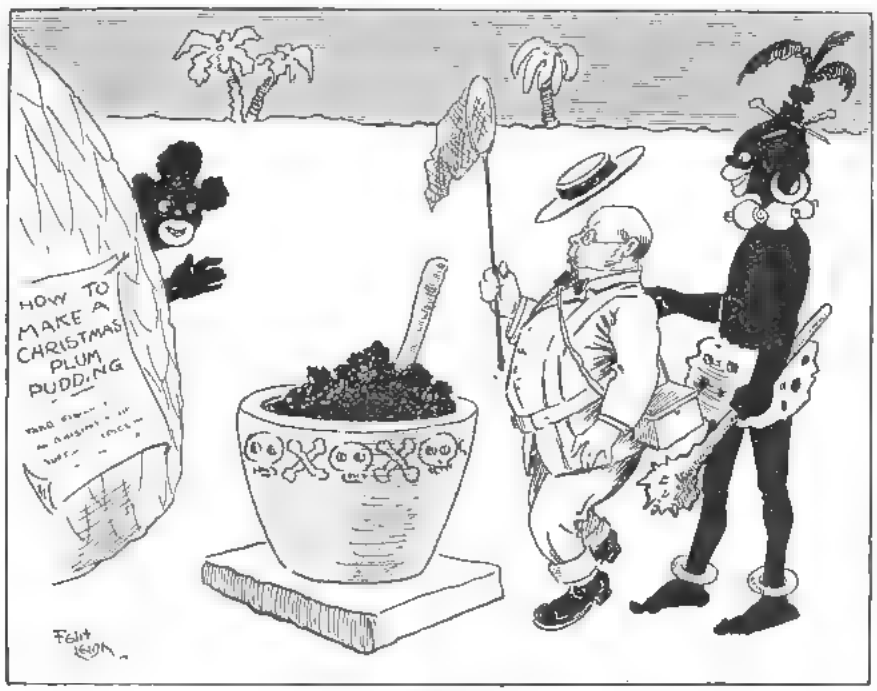

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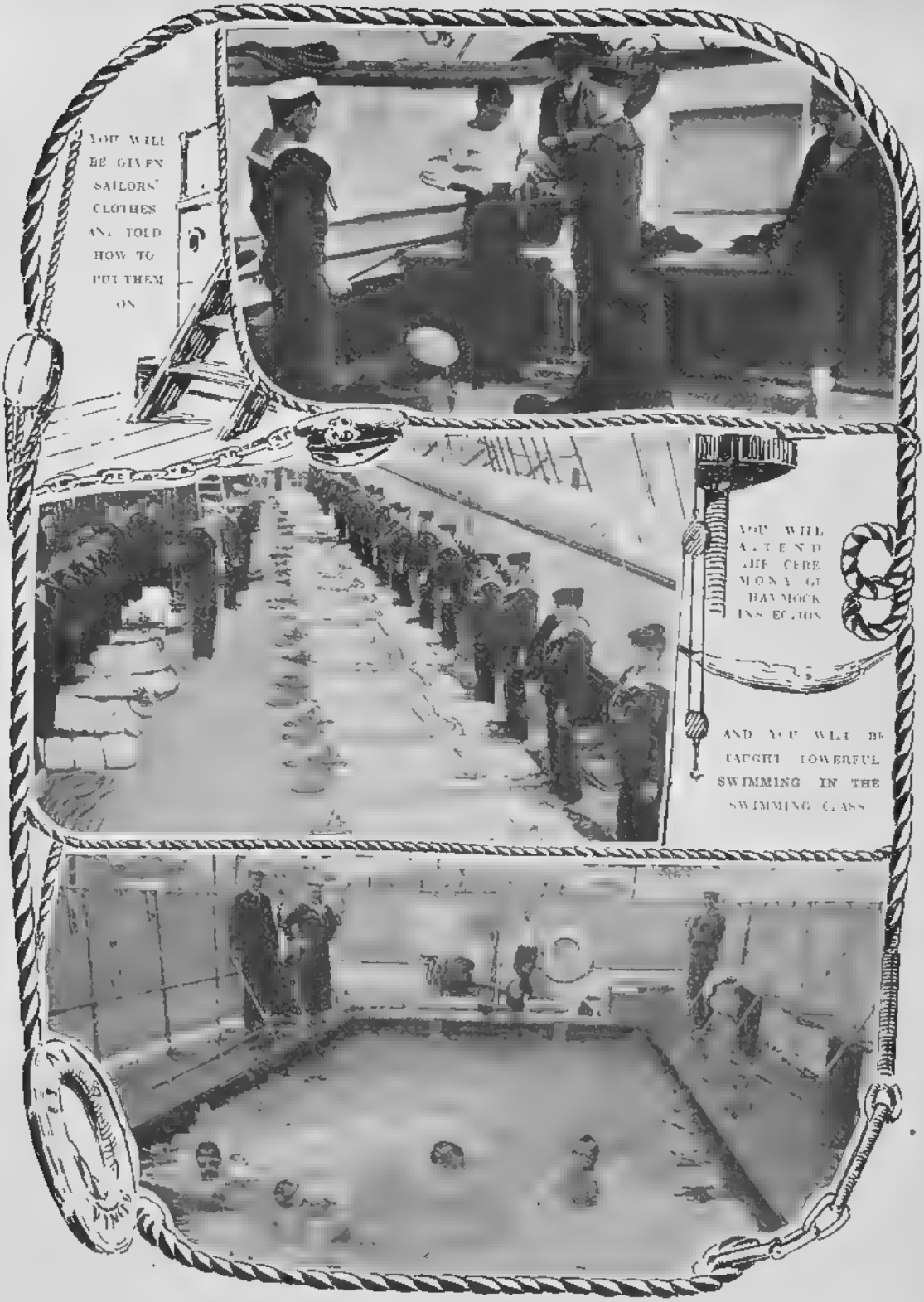
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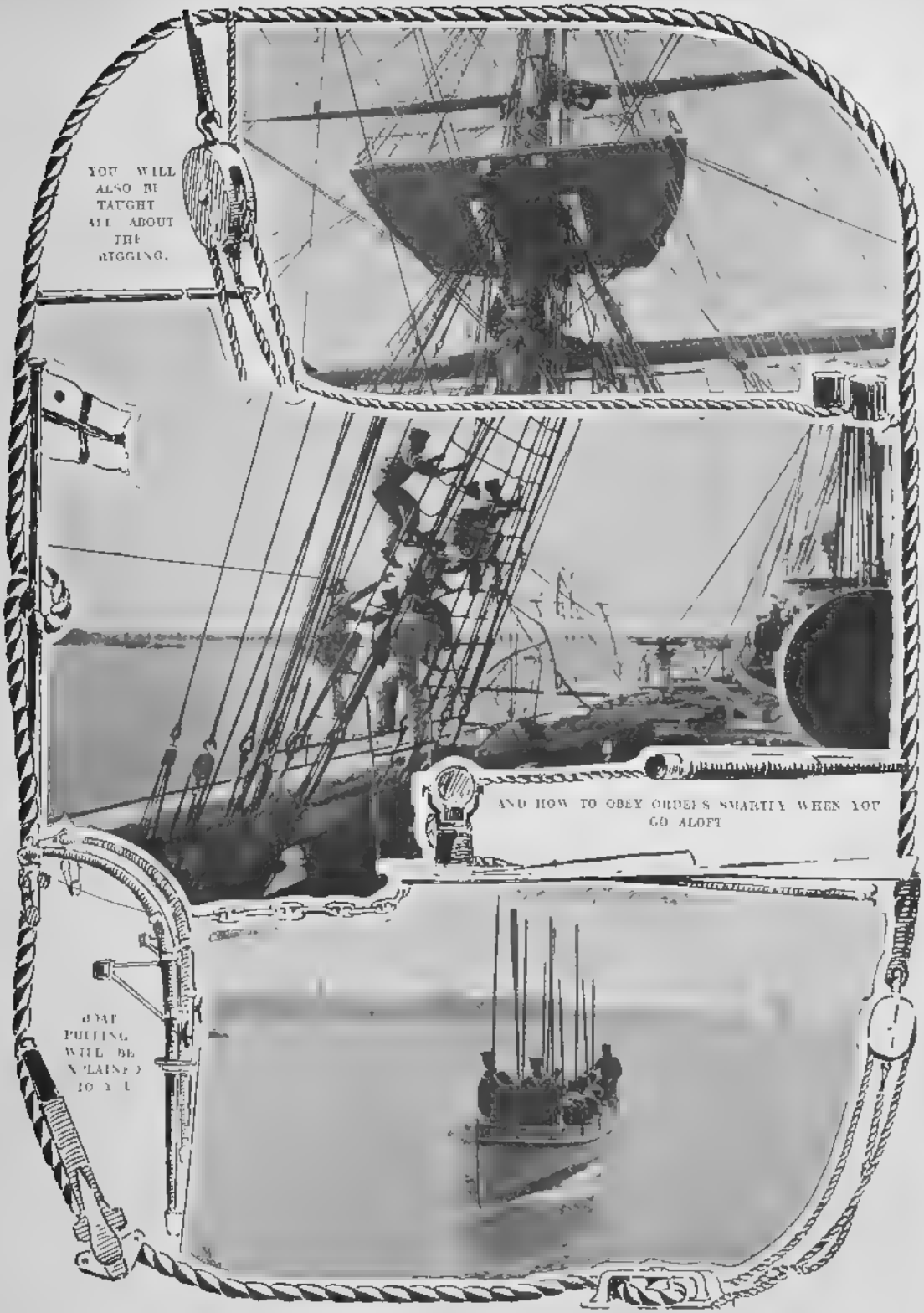
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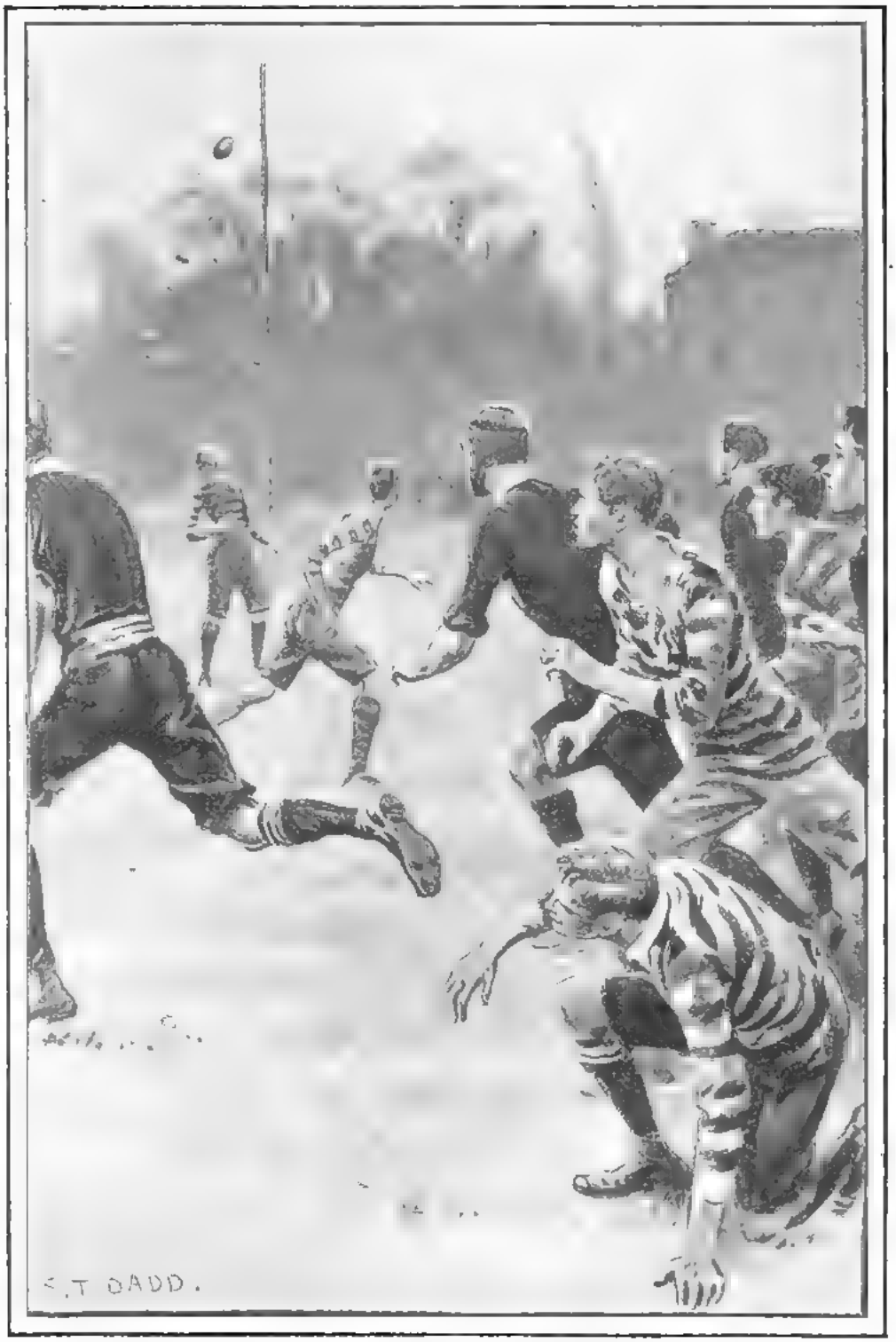

THE WIND CAUGHT IT AND CARRIED IT ON RIGHT BETWEEN THE POSTS

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A RUGGER EPISODE.

By STUART WISHING.

Illustrated by S. T. Dadd.

"CONGRATTERS, old chap! Hearty congrats!"

"Well done, Tommy! Score for you!"

"Well played, Tommy! Mind you buck up and win!"

The above remarks—and many in a similar strain—were caused by the appearance of a list on the notice-board. It was the official team chosen to represent the house in the Junior House Cup. It was a very ordinary sheet of note-paper, and the handwriting was not above criticism, but I was far too excited and pleased to quarrel with details. My name appeared at the head of the team, with the important word "Capt." in brackets after it. I -Thomas Calmour—had been thought worthy of the honour of leading our Junior XV. into the field, and you can imagine how full of beans I was.

You see, it had been a toss-up whether I or a man called Parkinson should occupy that coveted position: we had both received our junior caps two years ago, and stood more or less on the same footing in the Rugger world. He was a trifle faster on the field than I, but his passing was erratic, and he had a tendency to lose his head in exciting moments. I had schooled myself to keep my eyes open and my brain clear throughout the game, and I fancy it must have been this which influenced my chance.

Dickie, of course, was in the team too, but in a somewhat lower situation. Measles had laid him low the year I got my colours; and though he was a rattling good forward the captaincy always goes to the senior man.

"Good man," chuckled Dickie, as we walked away from the applauding throng "I'm awfully glad."

"Thanks very much, old boy," I answered. "I don't feel sorrowful myself . . . But we shall have to beat the Wilsonites."

"Yes—they're our only danger. If we can once walk through that lot, the rest of the cup-ties will be quite soft. I think we shall do it, although they *are* a hot crowd."

"We have the pull of them forward, and our halves are nippier. They score at three-quarters, and their back is a sounder man than Parks. Parks' tackling is so weak; he's a huge kick—I've never seen a chap of his age who could lift a ball so far—but his collaring will let us down badly."

"I hope not," I said gravely, for I was beginning to feel the responsibilities of office. "Perhaps the greatness of the occasion will put nerve into him."

"Possibly—but I rather doubt it. He's not a funk, certainly; but he doesn't seem to have the idea of going low for a man—getting him round the knees or ankles, and bringing him heftily to the carpet."

"You talk like a sporting penny-a-liner, Dickie. Well, we must just do the best we can, and try to bring off a *coup*."

"What's a 'coo,' old Brit. Enc.?"

"Ignorant beast! A coup—C-O-U-P—means a whack in the eye for the other fellow, of course."

"Oh, does it? Well, I wish you weren't such a foreigner in your talk, Tommy. Otherwise you might, with care and patience, be quite a decent chap."

"Funny little fellow," I said, talking paternally to shut him up. "Mind you're out of bed at seven to have a trot before breakfast every day. We've got to be in good training for the match."

"I shall be up before you," Dickie retorted; "and I shall have the pleasure of pulling you into your bath."

"We shall see," I replied guardedly, and then we adjourned for tea.

* * * * *

By an error of judgment on the next day, I was asleep when my pal arrived at my bedside. Had he come alone, I should not have objected—which you will find is an Unfulfilled Condition in Past Time, if you look up your Thomson's Syntax. Being a callous brute by nature, he aroused the rest

of the team first, and my awakening was abrupt and confusing. Three on your chest at a time has the makings of a first-class nightmare, I can assure you; and when the remainder—eleven, you will find, if you work it out—when the remainder are armed with wet towels for flapping purposes, and wet sponges as additional persuaders, it is obvious that I and my bed soon parted company. I dressed rapidly, and we all trooped outside.

"What's the programme, Tommy?" asked one.

"Walk a quarter of a mile and sprint in the last hundred yards," I answered. "I believe that's the best thing to do—makes you awfully fit, and your wind is twice as good for the rest of the day."

"Any regulations as regards grub?"

"Of course; there mustn't be any grub-shop visits—that's out of the question. As to the rest—well, I don't think it matters much. Don't eat pastry and a lot of jam, or anything of that sort. Oh! by the way—don't go in for excessive drinking."

"You're more in danger of that than we are," said Dickie. "I think you can trust us, Tommy, not to make fools of ourselves in training. We jolly well mean to win this match—eh, you chaps?"

"Rather!" they said in a hearty chorus, as they are a very decent set of kids. Dickie is a very sound man to back you up, as he has the knack of making himself popular.

"I'll race you in the last hundred," I remarked airily, as we were finishing our brief walk round.

"Right O!" answered the body-guard; and we all charged home in magnificent style. That was what did the mischief. It is a sad story to chronicle, but I must give you the whole tale, though even now I almost blub with rage at the memory.

We left the playground, and ran across the road in a bunch. Dickie was leading, and I was a good third—the rest well up. Just as we approached the path I cannoned into the second man, tripped, and came down a regular good 'un on the kerb—my left arm underneath me

"No luck, Tommy," said Dickie, and the others laughed, but I felt unable to rise.

"I—I say," I began rather weakly; and then, like an ass, I fainted. I presume they were rather startled—Dickie says they were, at any rate—and then he and the next biggest carried me into the matron's room. She knew there was a match in a week's time, so of course she sent for the doctor at once. By the time he arrived I was beginning to feel a bit cheap—tucked up in bed again.

"Hullo, youngster!" he said cheerily—he's a very decent sort—"what have you been up to?"

I told him as briefly as I could.

"Let me have a look at it," he went on, and began to paw me about. "Ah. . . . I thought so. . . ."

"I say! That hurts, you know," I warned him.

"Yes, I'm afraid it must. . . . I'll be as gentle as I can."

"What have I done to the beastly thing?"

"Nothing very serious," he said. "It might have been much worse. It's only a simple fracture—we'll soon have it set."

He set it very quickly, and I'm bound to say it didn't hurt as much as I expected. I like a fellow who doesn't jaw, but gets to work and has it over soon.

"There—is that comfortable?" he asked, when the job was finished.

"Quite comfortable," I replied. "But—I say! When may I take these splints off? To-morrow?"

"Those splints will have to stay on some little time. You must stay in bed a couple of days, and you won't be able to play any games for two or three months yet."

"What?" I said. "You told me it was nothing serious."

"It isn't serious, my boy," he replied. "It's quite a simple thing—but you mustn't play games—I suppose that's serious from your point of view?"

"But—doctor—there's a most important match on next week. Couldn't you put me right by that time?"

"I'm afraid that's quite out of the question," he said. "Awfully sorry, old chap—but we can't do impossibilities. I must be off now—see you again soon."

He's a tactful chap, I can tell you. He saw I was pretty sick of life just then, so he left the room quietly and quickly. I heard him talking to the matron outside the door, and caught a few of his words. "Be all right again soon—nothing serious—poor little chap is rather disappointed." I felt pleased that he didn't put my sickness down to the setting business, but I don't think he ought to have alluded to me as a little chap—not

quite the thing between man and man, you know.

Then Dickie came in.

"Hullo, Tommy!" he began. "Feeling better now?"

"Oh, I'm all right now," I told him; "but, I say—I can't play next week."

"*What?*"

"Broken arm—no luck, is it?"

"*Poor* old beast," he said, like the dear old chap he is. "I'm awfully sorry. What a score for the Wilsonites!"

"You won't miss me much," I remarked, trying to look cheerful. "Young Rawlings can play on the wing instead."

"Young Rawlings!" he said contemptuously. "I wish to goodness I'd crocked instead of you. It would have been much better for the team."

"Don't talk rot—he's a pacy man, and a smart tackler, too."

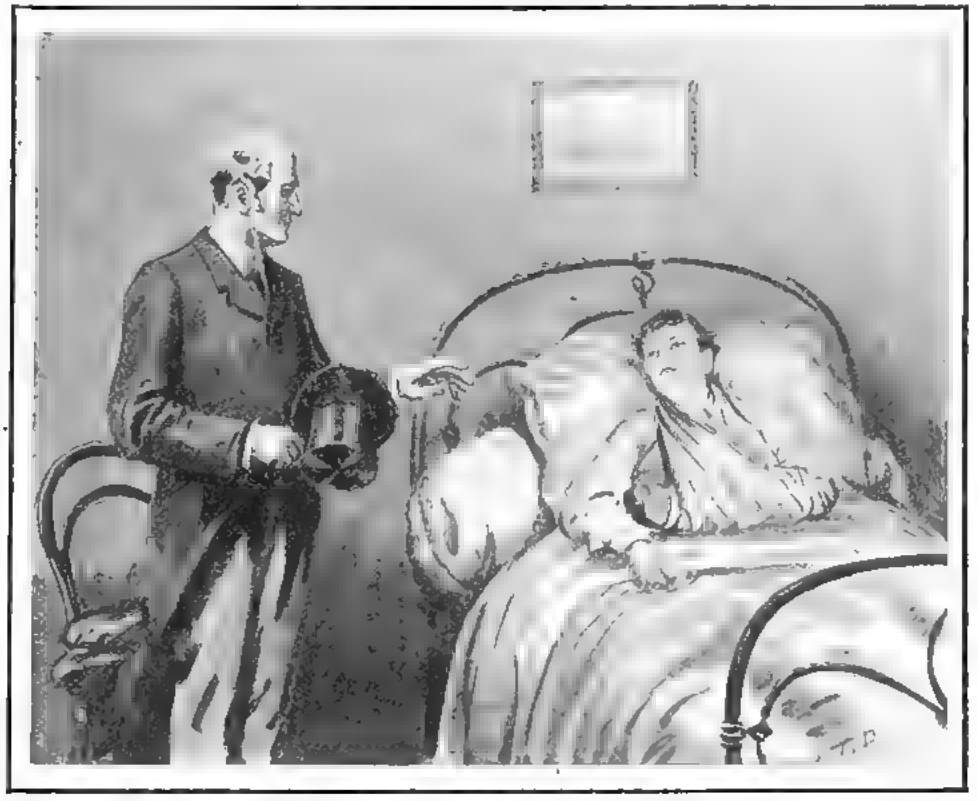
"Oh, he's all *that*; but he's not you—and Parkinson will captain the team now. He's bound to make a mess of it."

"Well, it can't be helped. I daresay he'll get you through all right."

"We'll do our best, of course. But I wish you were playing . . . When are you going to get up, old man?"

"Got to stop in bed two days, and keep these beastly splints on for goodness knows how long."

"But you can use your right arm still, I suppose?"



"YOU WON'T BE ABLE TO PLAY FOR TWO OR THREE MONTHS YET."

"Oh, yes—that's not touched. I shall be in school again the day after to-morrow, I should think. Anyhow, I'm coming to watch the match."

"Why don't you touch-judge?"

"By Jove! That's rather a notion. I think I will. At all events I should then have some active interest in the game, even though I can't play myself. . . . Yes, I'll certainly touch-judge. Good idea of yours, Dickie."

"You'll have to give us words of wisdom throughout the game, and at half-time you'll swagger on with your flag—they all

do, you know—and tell us what we've done wrong, and how we're to do it right, and all that sort of thing."

"Don't be an ox, Dickie. . . . Heigho! I wish to goodness I could play."

"Yes, it's distinctly rotten luck. . . . Well, I must trot down now Can I get you anything before I go?"

"No, thanks—oh, yes; you might collar a *Sportsman* from somewhere, will you? I want to read that account of the Blackheath and Cardiff match. It must have been a tough game."

"Right O! Nothing else? Then I'm off."

He departed, leaving me much more cheerful than I had been before his visit Certainly it was jolly rough luck getting crocked just before the house-match—especially when I was captain. But if only my team could beat the Wilsonites, I felt that I shouldn't care very much. I would touch-judge—that was settled in my own mind. Not all the doctors, matrons, or house-masters should deprive me of that honour; and I derived some small amount of consolation from the thought. With this resolve, I went peacefully to sleep, in spite of the fact that it was not yet nine o'clock in the morning. Sleep is a very sound thing, you know.

* * * * *

At last the great day arrived—the day on which would be settled the vexed question as to the superior house. Of course, it was only the first tie, but we knew the form of the other houses, and they themselves admitted that Wilsons and we were the pick of the bunch. The Wilsonites, on the whole, were the favourites; but we had our supporters, too; and, personally, I couldn't help thinking that, even with Rawlings as substitute, we should just get home by a narrow margin. All the same, I was anxious.

With some difficulty, and against the matron's wish, I had obtained leave to wield one of the flags. The house-master was rather doubtful, but the doctor stood my friend, and, like the good chap he is, said that it wouldn't do me the least harm if I was careful to skip clear when the game came my way. I vowed obedience, and, after some moments' wavering, I was allowed to go across to the playground, a smart green and white flag in my right hand—my left arm in a sling. The empty coat-sleeve looked jolly heroic, and all that sort of thing, don't you know.

"Cheer O, Tommy!" said Moffat, the captain of the opposing team. "Sorry you can't play—I should have loved to roll you in the mud."

"You'd have been the victim, old buck," I retorted. "Good job for you I'm not. But I can't waste time with kids. Where's Parkinson?"

"Here you are," said Parks, my deputy. "I wish you had charge of our lot, old man -I'm beastly nervous."

"Rot! You'll be an A1 captain. Try to rush them forward at first if you can. If not, let the ball out, and score at once."

"I'll do what I can, Tommy. You think it's a forward game?"

"*At first*, mind. But you must just see how the land lies. Hullo! they're going to start. Good luck!"

The teams lined up for the fray, and the whistle went. We had lost the toss, and were playing against the wind. Parkinson kicked off, and the centre to whom it went fumbled the ball from sheer nervousness. He caught it all right—or so it seemed—but then chucked it forward for no apparent reason. The scrum formed down in the enemy's twenty-five, and our lot began to look cheerful.

"Wilsons! Wilsons!" yelled the crowd.

"Gaffinites! Gaffinites!" we yelled back, while the two fifteens settled down to work.

I watched anxiously, for it didn't seem quite so good for us as I *had* hoped. The first five minutes were spent entirely in their half, but I couldn't help seeing that this was due to nerves. Wilsons' hadn't found their feet as yet, and our men were not very steady. Our forwards were beating them by sheer force of weight; we shoved them steadily, but didn't gain much. Either we over-ran the ball, or kicked it too hard through the back row of the scrum, or else their halves got round too quickly. The Wilsonite forwards were light, but made up for this inferiority by additional cleverness. Our "threes" never had a chance, and I saw that things were getting serious.

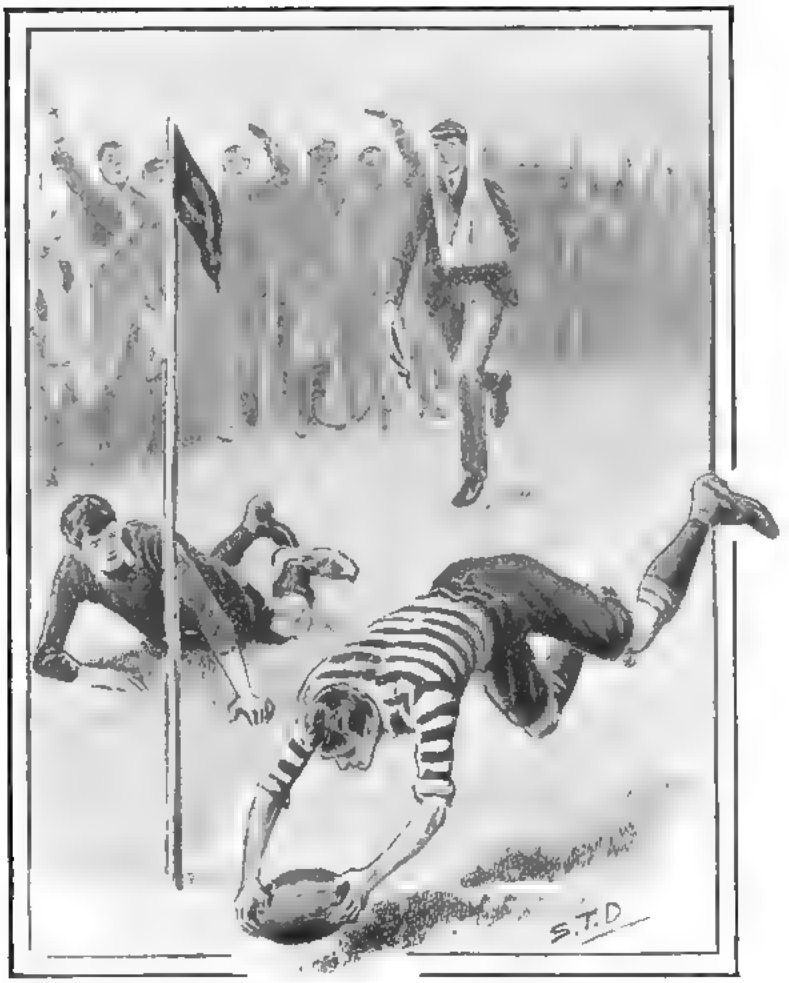
For five minutes, as I have said, they were all at sea, and the cheers of their partisans were stilled. Then a wonderful change came over the game: one of their centres got hold of the ball, ran ten yards, and punted high: the wind took it and carried it well down into our half—nicely into touch. The ball was thrown out, and one of their smart forwards took it clean,

put it down, dribbled right past our back, and scored underneath the posts. The try was easily converted.

This reverse spurred our chaps to desperate efforts. Parks cheered his men on like a good 'un, and set them a fine example of pluck and keenness. I've never seen him tackle so well as he did on that memorable day. Hitherto he had gone for his men in a curious and original fashion, seeming to aim at their eye-lids or nostrils in preference to the feet. But now all was changed—he hurled himself at their ankles, and at least three times he saved a certain try—twice collaring their speedy wing when no one else was up, and the third time falling well on the ball underneath about five of their men. He emerged smiling, and continued his exhortations: I felt proud of his captaincy.

But it was useless—the wind was too strong. Whenever we kicked the ball didn't travel a bit, and as often as not was blown back behind its starting-point. In despair, Parks at last told his men not to kick, as we only lost ground, but to run with the ball, or dribble: as the plan paid, you may guess that the wind was fairly strong.

The Wilsonites continued to press, and ten minutes after the first score there was a scrum about half-way. Some fool in our front row simply hoofed the ball into their feet: our men shoved hard, and the Wilsonites gave ground—but it was too late for us. Already the ball had travelled through the three rows, been gathered smartly by their half, and passed out to the expectant three-quarter. He got clean away, passed to his centre, who transferred it to his partner as *our* centre pulled him down.



THE WING FLUNG HIMSELF FORWARD FULL LENGTH AND GROUNDED THE BALL.

The ball rolled back—the right wing dashed up—gathered it—and flew down the touch-line. Parks ran across—flung himself at the man—missed him by a coat of paint—and the wing flinging himself forward full-length, grounded the ball.

"How's that for touch?" asked Parks, as the referee came up.

"Was it touch, Calmour?" asked the referee.

I shook my head sadly, wishing I hadn't got a conscience.

"No touch," I said.

"Try," observed the referee, and the Wilsonites yelled with joy.

There was one small grain of comfort—the try was not converted; so the score stood a goal and a try—eight points—to *nil*.

As they were walking back, a brilliant idea struck me.

"Here, Parks!" I said quietly. "It's no good against the wind—and we've got them forward. Take a man out of the pack, and play five three-quarters till half-time."

"By Jove! That's a notion," he replied; and promptly acted on the suggestion. Wishart was subtracted from the scrum, and the game went on.

The plan worked admirably. Our seven forwards managed to hold their own, and the additional "three" made all the difference to our defence. Time after time the Wilsonites got the ball and broke away—but our extra man puzzled them sadly, and half-time arrived with the score unincreased. I walked across to the centre of the field and addressed my crowd.

"Well played, you chaps!" I said. "You're bucking up excellently. You've got the wind with you this half, and ought to do the trick. Jolly good wheeze the fifth 'three'—eh?"

"Rather—they couldn't understand it at all."

"Hope you don't want me out as three again," said Wishart, disconsolately. "I don't like it at all."

"No—we'll have you in the scrum again," I said. "You ought simply to run over them now. Keep your heads, and don't lose the ball. Don't hoof it to them—keep your fat legs clear as it travels through the scrum—keep it tight till you get it to their twenty-five—then have it out, and walk over the line."

"Sounds all right," said Parks. "Hullo! There's the whistle."

The game re-started, and our hopes began to rise as we watched our men carry all before them. The wind was as strong as ever, and was now behind our backs. Wilson's lot bucked up well, and refrained from kicking, even as we had. Their forwards were smart dribblers, and gave our backs some work to do; but we shoved gamely, and after about five attempts managed to heel the ball very cleanly. It came out beautifully, *viâ* the halves and threes, and we scored right in the centre. The try became a goal, and the score was eight points to five in their favour.

Encouraged by this, we pursued the same tactics—viz., kept the ball tight till close to their line, and then heeled out. Ten minutes later another try was registered in almost the same place—right in front of the posts, and the match seemed all over bar the shouting. Parks took the kick, and we watched without any great anxiety, for he was a sound shot. As ill-luck would have it, however, the ball was badly placed, and rolled over just as he made his effort. The ball hopped feebly along the ground—in any direction but that of the goal. The Wilsonites yelled themselves hoarse, while we were correspondingly glum.

"Never mind," said one of our spectators—Naylor; "we shall score again in another minute. It's a draw at present, and there's another quarter of an hour to play. You've no chance."

"Oh, haven't we?" said one of the opposite faction. "Just wait and see. What price our extra three?"

I looked, and, to my disgust, saw that the Wilsonites had followed our idea, and were playing five men in their line. This was annoying.

"Never mind," said Naylor. "Your forwards are too light to hold us. It won't do you any good."

This was precisely what I myself thought; and, according to all the probabilities, what should have happened. But—it didn't come off. You see, we had been playing against the wind for half an hour, and were distinctly blown at half-time. Our men were heavy—one or two rather too heavy—and I was sorry to notice a few passengers in the scrum. The enemy were nerved to supreme efforts, and bucked along so keenly that even now it was anybody's game. The wind was a huge handicap to them, and of course we made the most of it. But our old faults developed—the forwards lost their heads, and forgot how to heel out: the opposing backs were on to ours like a knife as soon as the ball appeared, and, to our disgust, we saw that their seven were almost holding our eight, in consequence of superior staying power.

Time after time we got within ten yards of their line—again and again we dashed forward, only to be repulsed. Parks tried a drop-kick, and succeeded in hitting the bar: the ball rebounded: their speedy wing got possession, and raced away to our goal. He was grassed—inches only from our line, while we held our breath.

"Near go," said Naylor. "Looks as if it would be a draw. It's time now—no! three minutes still. I say!"

His exclamation was caused by a dying

effort on the part of our halves and forwards. In a surging mass they swept down the field, the ball well at their toes. On they came, the Wilsonites panting after them. One of their centres fell on the ball—half rose—it was kicked from beneath him, and shot slanty-ways across the ground. Then an incident occurred which I shall remember as long as I live. Dickie was charging up, going like a motor-car in a fit—absolutely frenzied and (so to speak) foaming at the mouth. He had lost all knowledge of what was going on, I firmly believe, and did a thing which I have never seen done before or since. He took a wild hack—I mentally slanged him for bad footer, and was just beginning to say "You ass!——"

"Look! Look!" yelled Naylor frantically, waving his cap and jumping about like an animated photograph.

I watched with straining eyes: the ball, kicked by chance more than by design, rose high: the wind caught it and carried it on right between the posts. A mighty howl arose.

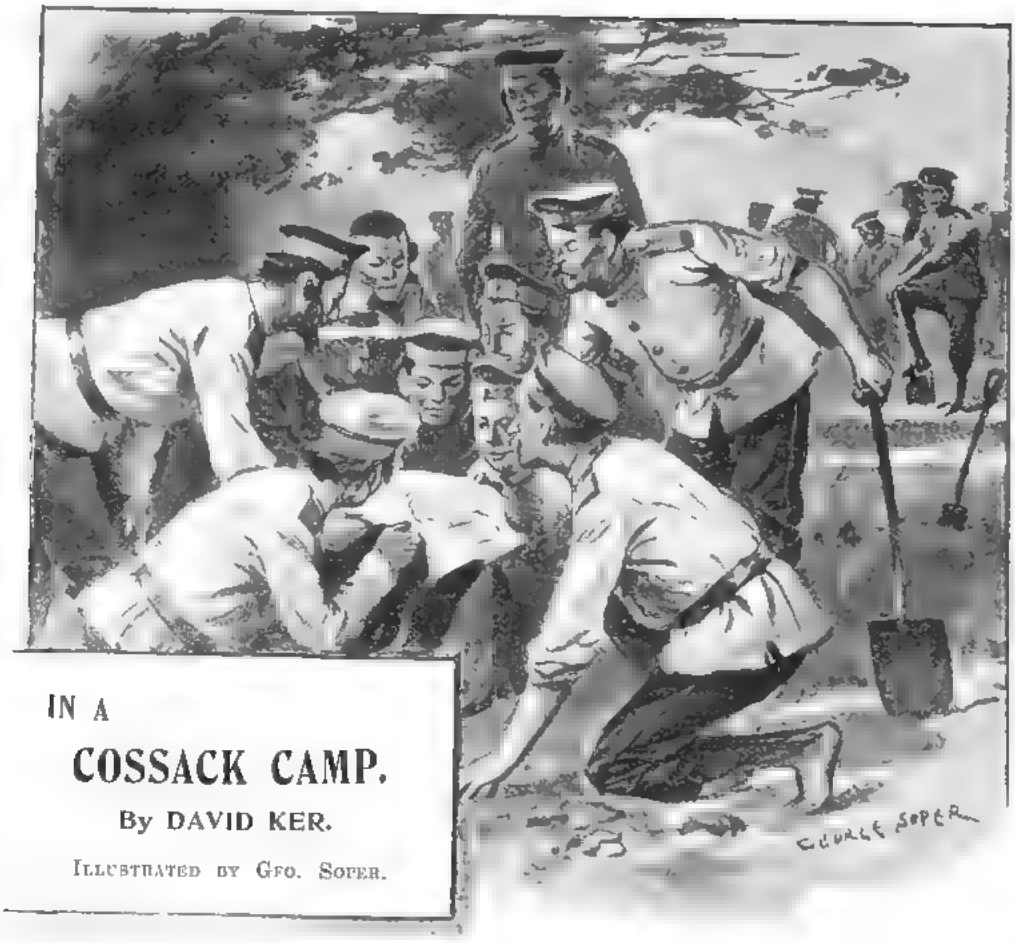
"It doesn't count," I gasped. "The——"

"It *does!* A field goal!" yelled the crowd. The whistle blew, and the match was over. We had scored a glorious victory.

Dickie was carried shoulder-high from the field, and I went off to prepare a banquet for the hero—all traces of my disappointment quite dispelled by his lucky shot.

[*Note.*—Lest the reader should think the above incident too improbable, the author wishes to state that he has once had the pleasure of seeing a field-goal kicked. It was on the Cambridge ground, in a 'Varsity v. Leicester match, some two or three seasons back. The kicker was Bedell-Sivwright (the younger). The match in question resulted in an easy win for the 'Varsity.]

THE HAMPER.
Photo. by T. B. W. Strong.



IN A

COSSACK CAMP.

By DAVID KER.

Illustrated by Geo. Soper.

"QUICK, Fyodka (Theodore), and dip that long nose of yours in the river. There's a fly just settled on the tip, and perhaps you might catch a fish with it!"

"Aye, for you to eat, I suppose, Stepka (Steve), my boy. It will be long enough before you catch one for yourself, though you can always eat your share of what *we* catch —and more too!"

And then the two big Cossacks (mere overgrown children in their love of joking and romping) supplemented their plain-spoken "chaff" with a sudden burst of horse-play, which might have seemed a trifle rough to any one less thoroughly used to it.

What they and their comrades were about I could perceive at a glance.

I had already seen, in various parts of Central Asia, these born soldiers pitch their tents so quickly and handily, that their camp seemed actually to spring up from the earth of itself. But this was evidently a more permanent affair—nothing less than the building of the "summer quarters," from which they meant to keep down the native raiders, some stray bands of whom still haunted this wild region on the brink of the eternal desert.

Upon the flat, sandy shore of the Syr-Daria or Jaxartes (which looked very much like a stream of mutton-broth flowing between two banks of brown bread) has been marked out a space of a hundred feet by twenty, in which some dozens of tall, wiry, sun-browned, keen-eyed Cossacks are working with an energy that excites the wondering scorn of the watching Tartars, who plainly have all the contempt of the true Oriental for any man that is fool enough to labour when he might be doing nothing.

Even a Tartar, however, can be active when he likes. Glancing along the bank, I

espy a grey-headed patriarch, in a grimy sheepskin frock, beating his wife about the head with a mutton-bone, with the steady, concentrated energy of a man whose heart is in his work; and, a moment later, I catch sight of three more of the tribe, in the costume of Adam before the Fall, towing a small raft laboriously against the current

Turning once more to the Cossack labourers, I am amazed to see how rapidly the work is growing up under their skilful hands.

The building is seemingly meant to consist of two long compartments, with a kind of porch (or, rather, a covered passage-way) through the centre. One of these divisions is already all but completed, and the other well in hand.

Its construction appears to be simple enough. Two parallel rows of forked saplings are fixed in the ground, and topped with cross-pieces to form the roof. The whole frame-work is then covered with sheets of strong reed-matting, and furnished with a few small, square, embrasure-like windows, made of fine gauze instead of glass, so as to admit light and air while keeping out the dust and mosquitoes.

More than a dozen men are hard at work upon the second compartment, laying the cross-poles of the roof, hauling up the reed-mats, cutting spaces for the windows, reeving, pegging, splicing, as busily as if Peter the Great himself were looking on; and beneath the porch above-mentioned, three hideous old women (with faces like Flemish oak-carvings) are grouped, witch-fashion, round a huge Russian samovar (tea-urn), which a tall Cossack has just filled with the gruel-coloured water of the river.

All around the site of the new camp scores of gaunt, tough, sinewy figures, barefooted and bare-armed, with their ragged white jackets all one smear of wet clay, are hard at work to lay out their tiny cabbage-gardens—digging, fencing, planting, trenching little water-courses, and filling them from the river, while scraps of blunt, soldierly "chaff" fly about like hail.

"Hollo, Phomka (Tommy), don't you know how to handle a spade yet? 'Pon my word, one would think, to look at you, that you were supping cabbage-soup with a big spoon!"

"So I am—and here's a pinch of *salt* to put in the soup, Vanya (Johnny), my lad!"

So saying, the speaker coolly shovels a spadeful of dirt right in the jester's face, amid a general roar of laughter.

"That's the style! Now, Vanya, quick and plant some cabbages on your face; there's earth enough on it to grow 'em, no fear!"

"Oh, bless you, he has never learned to plant cabbages yet; he has only learned to eat 'em!"

"Gently with that bucket of yours, brother Ostap! If it were a glass of *vodka* (corn-whisky) you would not spill so much of it, I'll be bound!"

"No, I shouldn't—for you'd steal it all before I had time!" retorts Ostap—a tall, gaunt fellow with a thick red moustache—grinning at his own wit.

And with that he "accidentally" upsets half the water over the joker himself, who replies by seizing the bucket, and drenching Ostap in turn with what is left.

"Now, Mitya (Dmitri), up with you on to that hillock, and frighten away those carrion-crows yonder with that ugly face of yours!"

"All the better for *you*, Master Andrioosha (Andrew), if I do frighten 'em away, or they would all be down upon you in a moment; they are fond of anything nasty, you know!"

And so the pastoral eclogue goes on, varied every now and then by a general bear-fight among these rough, good-humoured, overgrown schoolboys, who certainly seem to bear this dreary outpost life of theirs gaily enough.

Meanwhile the Kirghiz savages in the background look gravely on, sitting in their tent-doors just as Abraham sat in his, on the steppes of the south, four thousand years ago; and I look at them in their turn, for, in truth, they are well worth studying.

These wild fellows, gaunt, hook-nosed, fierce-eyed, skin-clad, with their shaggy black hair hanging in elf-locks round their lean, dark, wolfish faces, are, so to speak, the original manuscript of the Turk, as he was ere revised and corrected by European surroundings; and those who have seen what he can be even now, may judge for themselves what he must have been at his first historical appearance, in the middle of the sixth century, when the great Greek Emperor, Justinian, was startled by the sudden apparition in Constantinople, for the first time, of a train of hobgoblin envoys "from a certain remote people called Turks."

Having finished my inspection of them, I get out my Russian map of Central Asia,

"HERE'S A PINCH OF SALT TO PUT IN THE SOUP, VANYA, MY LAD."

and sit down to study it in the shade of almost the only tree within reach.

But I am not left long undisturbed. With regard to anything that he has not seen before, the Cossack is as eager and curious as a child; and I have hardly unfolded the map, when a big, yellow-haired, sun-browned fellow steals up behind me, and peers over my shoulder.

His loud exclamation of wonder and delight brings up at once two or three of his nearest comrades; and then others follow, and others still, till I am shut in with a complete wall of wild faces and jostling shoulders.

Never has any lecturer had a more attentive audience; and I begin my discourse with a certainty of full success.

"Well, brothers, do you want to have a look at it? Look away, then, all of you, and welcome!"

"What is it a picture of, then, father? we can't quite make it out."

"It is not a picture at all, my lads; it is a map of all Central Asia, and you can see on it all the line of your march since you

started, and every place that you have passed through on the way."

Visible sensation in the audience, and general exchange of looks of marked unbelief.

"What! all our line of march on that little thing? You must be making fun of us, father—how could such a thing ever be?"

"I'll make that plain to you in a moment, brothers. Tell me, what was the place that you started from?"

"Orenburg," replied half a dozen voices at once, while the eager ring of sun-bronzed faces about me presses closer and closer.

"Well, there it is for you, then, you see, right up at the top there," answer I, as I point to it with my pencil.

"So it is—I can read it!" calls out a slim, sharp-faced little fellow on my left, who, having actually learned to read, is naturally glad of any chance to show off so rare an accomplishment. "O, R, E, N, B, U, R, G, Orenburg—so it is! Wonderful, brothers, wonderful!"

Then follow signs of marked approval from my other hearers, who are plainly convinced at last; and a brisk cross-fire of eager questions and comments begins at once.

"Where is Fort Uralsk, father? we made a halt there, I remember, on our way down."

"Is this the Kara-Koom Desert, that we had such a job to cross? It is painted like sand, somehow."

"And is that the Syr-Daria river there, twisting in and out like a snake?"

"Show us Kazalinsk—we remember it well enough."

"And Fort No. 2—and Fort Perovski."

And at last comes the great question of all, put to me by a grizzled, thick-set, hard-faced veteran, in whose low, broad forehead a Tartar sabre has trenched a deep and grisly scar.

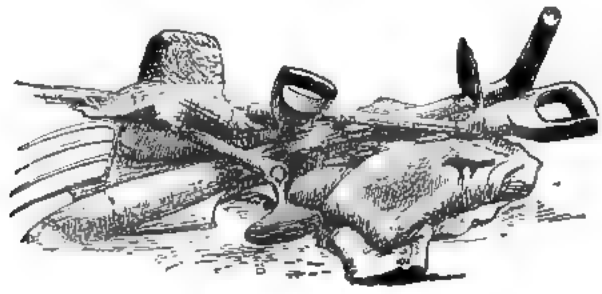
"Father, can you show us the very place where we are just now?"

"To be sure I can, my good fellow. Here, you see, is the river, from which you have been fetching water; and there is the fort, which lies yonder behind us; and the little black spot you see there is the village itself."

Here the general enthusiasm rises to a height, and for a moment or two my map is in no small peril. At length, amid the universal chorus of wondering delight, Ostap of the red moustache makes his voice heard, saying to me in a tone of reverential awe:

"But, father, tell me, for the love of Heaven, if we have marched a thousand miles and more since we left Holy Russia, how on earth does it all go down on a little bit of paper like that?"

I did my best to explain the seeming marvel, but I doubt very much if any of my hearers really took in the explanation; for, when I bade good-bye to them half an hour later, the hearty farewell of the simple, good-natured savages was flavoured with a manifest tincture of the awe-stricken reverence due to the greatness of that wonder-working "magician" who had actually "put all Central Asia on a little scrap of paper no bigger than an Easter-cake!"



THE HEAD OF KAY'S.

A PUBLIC SCHOOL STORY.

BY P. G. WODEHOUSE.

Illustrated by T. M. R. WHITWELL.

SYNOPSIS.

FENN is head of Kay's—the most disorderly house at Eckleton. His task in ruling such a crew is unsatisfactory enough, but Mr. Kay renders it doubly so by his unreasonable behaviour towards the captain of the house. Fenn is the finest cricketer in the school having been selected to play for his county in the holidays—and entirely by his efforts Kay's get into the final of the house matches. But Mr. Kay, who takes no interest whatever in the athletics of his house, keeps Fenn in on the afternoon of the match, and Kay's crack but only appears in time to go in last, the consequence being that Kay's lose the match. Feeling naturally runs high against Mr. Kay, who, owing to the illness of a colleague, is called upon to preside over the grand term-end concert—always a solemn and classical affair. Fenn is a performer. Having played a serious piece, an encore being demanded, he breaks into a giddy trifle called the "Coon Band Contest," which sets hundreds of feet stamping. The uproar (led by Kay malcontents) rises to such a pitch that the concert has to be brought to a premature close, and it is feared that the authorities will take action in the matter. When the school reassembles for the winter term Fenn is deposed from the headship of Kay's, a prefect named Kennedy being put in his place. The new appointment is regarded with resentment by Kay's, where Fenn was immensely popular as captain. To make matters worse, Fenn and Kennedy, formerly such excellent friends, fall out, the result being that Kennedy has to battle with the whole house single-handed. The leader of the malcontents is Walton, a big dunce, who exasperates Kennedy to such a degree that the latter determines to fight—and, if possible, thrash—him. They decide to have it out in a dormitory, and Jimmy Silver, a chum of Kennedy's, agrees to act as time-keeper.

CHAPTER XIII

THE FIGHT IN THE DORMITORY.

STATING it broadly, fighters may be said to be divided into two classes—those who are content to take two blows if they can give three in return, and those who prefer to receive as little punishment as possible, even at the expense of scoring fewer points themselves. Kennedy's position, when Jimmy Silver called time, was peculiar. On all the other occasions on which he had fought—with the gloves on in the annual competition and at the assault-at-arms—he had gone in for the policy of taking all that the other man liked to give him and giving rather more in exchange. Now, however, he was obliged to alter his whole style. For a variety of reasons it was necessary that he should come out of this fight with as few marks as possible. To begin with, he represented, in a sense, the Majesty of the Law. He was tackling Walton more by way of an object-lesson to the Kayite mutineers than for his own personal satisfaction. The object-lesson would lose in impressiveness if he were compelled to go about for a week or so with a pair of black eyes or other adornments of a similar kind. Again—and this was even more important—if he was badly marked the affair must come to the knowledge of the headmaster. Being a prefect, and in the sixth form, he came into contact with the Head every day, and the disclosure of the fact that he had been engaged in a pitched battle with a member of his house, who was, in addition to other disadvantages, very low down in the school, would be likely to lead to unpleasantness. A school prefect of Eckleton was supposed to be hedged about with so much dignity that he could quell turbulent inferiors with a glance. The idea of one of the august body lowering himself to the extent of emphasising his authority with the bare knuckle would scandalise the powers.

So Kennedy, rising at the call of time from the bed on which he sat, came up to the scratch warily.

Walton, on the other hand, having everything to gain and nothing to lose, and happy in the knowledge that no amount of bruises could do him any harm, except physically, came on with the evident intention of making a hurricane fight of it. He had very little science as a boxer. Heavy two-handed slogging was his forte, and, as the majority of his opponents up to the present had not had sufficient skill to discount his strength, he had found this a very successful line of action. Kennedy and he had never had the gloves on together. In the competition of the previous year both had entered in their respective classes, Kennedy as a lightweight, Walton in the middles, and both, after

reaching the semi-final, had been defeated by the narrowest of margins by men who had since left the school. That had been in the previous Easter term, and, while Walton had remained much the same as regards weight and strength, Kennedy, owing to a term of hard bowling and a summer holiday spent in the open, had filled out. They were now practically on an equality, as far as weight was concerned. As for condition, that was all in favour of Kennedy. He played football in his spare time. Walton, on the days when football was not compulsory, smoked cigarettes.

Neither of the pair showed any desire to open the fight by shaking hands. This was not a friendly spar. It was business. The first move was made by Walton, who feinted with his right and dashed in to fight at close quarters. It was not a convincing feint. At any rate, it did not deceive Kennedy. He countered with his left, and swung his right at the body with all the force he could put into the hit. Walton went back a pace, sparred for a moment, then came in again, hitting heavily. Kennedy's counter missed its mark this time. He just stopped a round sweep of Walton's right, ducked to avoid a similar effort of his left, and they came together in a clinch

In a properly regulated glove-fight the referee, on observing the principals clinch, says, "Break away there, break away," in a sad, reproachful voice, and the fighters separate without demur, being very much alive to the fact that, as far as that contest is concerned, their destinies are in his hands, and that any bad behaviour in the ring will lose them the victory. But in an impromptu turn-up like this one the combatants show a tendency to ignore the rules so carefully mapped out by the present Marquess of Queensberry's grandfather, and revert to the conditions of warfare under which Cribb and Spring won their battles. Kennedy and Walton, having clinched, proceeded to wrestle up and down the room, while Jimmy Silver looked on from his eminence in pained surprise at the sight of two men, who knew the rules of the ring, so far forgetting themselves.

To do Kennedy justice, it was not his fault. He was only acting in self-defence. Walton had started the hugging. Also, he had got the under-grip, which, when neither man knows a great deal of the science of wrestling, generally means victory. Kennedy was quite sure that he could not throw his antagonist, but he hung on in the knowledge that the round must be over shortly, when Walton would have to loose him.

"Time," said Jimmy Silver.

Kennedy instantly relaxed his grip, and in that instant Walton swung him off his feet, and they came down together with a crash that shook the room. Kennedy was underneath, and, as he fell, his head came into violent contact with the iron support of a bed.

Jimmy Silver sprang down from his seat.

"What are you playing at, Walton? Didn't you hear me call time? It was a beastly foul—the worst I ever saw. You ought to be sacked for a thing like that. Look here, Kennedy, you needn't go on. I disqualify Walton for fouling."

The usually genial James stammered with righteous indignation.

Kennedy sat down on a bed dizzily.

"No," he said; "I'm going on."

"But he fouled you."

"I don't care. I'll look after myself. Is it time yet?"

"Ten seconds more, if you really are going on."

He climbed back on to the chest of drawers

"Time."

Kennedy came up feeling weak and sick. The force with which he had hit his head on the iron had left him dazed.

Walton rushed in as before. He had no chivalrous desire to spare his man by way of compensation for fouling him. What monopolised his attention was the evident fact that Kennedy was in a bad way, and that a little strenuous in-fighting might end the affair in the desired manner.

It was at this point that Kennedy had reason to congratulate himself on donning gymnasium shoes. They gave him that extra touch of lightness which enabled him to dodge blows which he was too weak to parry. Everything was vague and unreal to him. He seemed to be looking on at a fight between Walton and some stranger.

Then the effect of his fall began to wear off. He could feel himself growing stronger. Little by little his head cleared, and he began once more to take a personal interest in the battle. It is astonishing what a power a boxer, who has learnt the art carefully, has of automatic fighting. The expert gentleman who fights under the pseudonym of "Kid McCoy" once informed the present writer that in one of his fights he was knocked down by such a severe hit that he remembered nothing further, and it was only on reading the paper next morning that he found to his surprise that he had fought four more rounds after the blow and won the battle handsomely on points. Much the same thing happened to Kennedy. For the greater part of the second round he fought without knowing it. When Jimmy Silver called time he was in

as good case as ever, and the only effects of the blow on his head were a vast lump underneath the hair and a settled determination to win or perish. In a few minutes the bell would ring for tea, and all his efforts would end in nothing. It was no good fighting a draw with Walton if he meant to impress the house. He knew exactly what R .mour, assisted by Walton, would make of the affair in that case. "Have you heard the latest?" A would ask of B. "Why, Kennedy tried to touch Walton up for not playing footer, and Walton went for him and would have given him frightful beans only they had to go down to tea." There must be none of that sort of thing.

"Time," said Jimmy Silver, breaking in on his meditations.

It was probably the suddenness and unexpectedness of it that took Walton aback. Up till now his antagonist had been fighting strictly on the defensive, and was obviously desirous of escaping punishment as far as might be possible. And then the fall at the end of round one had shaken him up so that he could hardly fight at all at their second meeting. Walton naturally expected that it would be left to him to do the leading in round three. Instead of this, however, Kennedy opened the round with such a lightning attack that Walton was all abroad in a moment. In his most scientific mood he never had the remotest notion of how to guard. He was aggressive and nothing else. Attacked by a quick hitter, he was useless. Three times Kennedy got through his guard with his left. The third hit staggered him. Before he could recover Kennedy had got his right in, and down went Walton in a heap.

He was up again as soon as he touched the boards, and down again almost as soon as he was up. Kennedy was always a straight hitter, and now a combination of good cause and bad temper—for the thought of the foul in the first round had stirred what was normally a more or less placid nature into extreme viciousness—lent a vigour to his left arm to which he had hitherto been a stranger. He did not use his right again. It was not needed.

Twice more Walton went down. He was still down when Jimmy Silver called time. When the half-minute interval between the rounds was over he stated that he was not going on.

Kennedy looked across at him as he sat on a bed dabbing tenderly at his face with a handkerchief, and was satisfied with the success of his object-lesson. From his own face the most observant of headmasters could have detected no evidence that he had been engaged in a vulgar fight. Walton, on the other hand, looked as if he had been engaged in several—all violent. Kennedy went off to his study to change, feeling that he had advanced a long step on the thorny path that led to the Perfect House.

CHAPTER XIV.

FENN RECEIVES A LETTER.

BUT the step was not such a very long one after all. What it amounted to was simply this, that open rebellion ceased in Kay's. When Kennedy put up the list on the notice-board for the third time, which he did on the morning following his encounter with Walton, and wrote on it that the match with Blackburn's would take place that afternoon, his team turned out like lambs, and were duly defeated by thirty-one points. He had to play a substitute for Walton, who was rather too battered to be of any real use in the scrum; but, with that exception, the team that entered the field was the same that should have entered it the day before.

But his labours in the Augean stables of Kay's were by no means over. Practically they had only begun. The state of the house now was exactly what it had been under Fenn. When Kennedy had taken over the reins Kay's had become on the instant twice as bad as it had been before. By his summary treatment of the revolution he had, so to speak, wiped off this deficit. What he had to do now was to begin to improve things. Kay's was now in its normal state, slack, rowdy in an underhand way, and utterly useless to the school. It was "up to" Kennedy, as they say in America, to start in and make something presentable and useful out of these unpromising materials.

What annoyed him more than anything else was the knowledge that if only Fenn chose to do the square thing and help him in his work the combination would be irresistible. It was impossible to make any leeway to speak of by himself. If Fenn would only forget his grievances and join forces with him, they could electrify the house.

Fenn, however, showed no inclination to do anything of the kind. He and Kennedy never spoke to one another now except when it was absolutely unavoidable, and then they behaved with that painful politeness in which the public schoolman always wraps himself as in a garment when dealing with a friend with whom he has quarrelled.

On the Walton episode Fenn had made no comment, though it is probable that he thought a good deal.

It was while matters were in this strained condition that Fenn received a letter from his elder brother. This brother had been at Eckleton in his time—School House—and had left five years before to go to Cambridge. Cambridge had not taught him a great deal, possibly because he did not meet the well-meant efforts of his tutor half-way. The net result of his three years at King's was—*imprimis*, a cricket blue, including a rather lucky eighty-three at Lord's; secondly, a very poor degree; thirdly and lastly, a taste for literature and the drama—he had been a prominent member of the Footlights Club. When he came down he looked about him for some occupation which should combine in happy proportions a small amount of work and a large amount of salary, and, finding none, drifted into journalism, at which calling he had been doing very fairly ever since.

"Dear Bob," the letter began. Fenn's names were Robert Mowbray, the second of which he had spent much of his time in concealing. "Just a line."

The elder Fenn always began his letters with these words, whether they ran to one sheet or eight. In the present case the screed was not particularly long

"Do you remember my reading you a bit of an opera I was writing? Well, I finished it, and, after going the round of most of the managers, who chucked it with wonderful unanimity, it found an admirer in Higgs, the man who took the part of the duke in *The Outsider*. Luckily, he happened to be thinking of starting on his own in opera instead of farce, and there's a part in mine which fits him like a glove. So he's going to bring it out at the Imperial in the spring, and by way of testing the piece—trying it on the dog, as it were—he means to tour with it. Now, here's the point of this letter. We start at Eckleton next Wednesday. We shall only be there one night, for we go on to Southampton on Thursday. I suppose you couldn't come and see it? I remember Peter Brown, who got the last place in the team the year I got my cricket colours, cutting out of his house (Kay's, by the way) and going down town to see a piece at the theatre. I'm bound to admit he got sacked for it, but still, it shows that it can be done. All the same, I shouldn't try it on if I were you. You'll be able to read all about the 'striking success' and 'unrestrained enthusiasm' in the *Eckleton Mirror* on Thursday. Mind you buy a copy."

The rest of the letter was on other subjects. It took Fenn less than a minute to decide to patronise that opening performance. He was never in the habit of paying very much attention to risks when he wished to do anything, and now he felt as if he cared even less than usual what might be the outcome of the adventure. Since he had ceased to be on speaking terms with Kennedy he had found life decidedly dull. Kennedy had been his only intimate friend. He had plenty of acquaintances, as a first eleven and first fifteen man usually has, but none of them were very entertaining. Consequently he welcomed the idea of a break in the monotony of affairs. The only thing that had broken it up to the present had been a burglary at the school house. Some enterprising marauder had broken in a week before and gone off with a few articles of value from the headmaster's drawing-room. But the members of the school house had talked about this episode to such an extent that the rest of the school had dropped off the subject, exhausted, and declined to discuss it further. And things had become monotonous once more.

Having decided to go, Fenn began to consider how he should do it. And here circumstances favoured him. It happened that on the evening on which his brother's play was to be produced the headmaster was giving his once-a-term dinner to the house-prefects. This simplified matters wonderfully. The only time when his absence from the house was at all likely to be discovered would be at prayers, which took place at half-past nine. The prefects' dinner solved this difficulty for him. Kay would not expect him to be at prayers, thinking he was over at the Head's, while the Head, if he noticed his absence at all, would imagine that he was staying away from the dinner owing to a headache or some other malady. It seemed tempting Providence not to take advantage of such an excellent piece of luck. For the rest, detection was practically impossible. Kennedy's advent to the house had ousted Fenn from the dormitory in which he had slept hitherto, and, there being no bed available in any of the other dormitories, he had been put into the spare room usually reserved for invalids whose invalidism was not of a sufficiently infectious kind to demand their removal to the infirmary. As for getting back into the house, he would leave the window of his study unfastened. He could easily climb on to the window-ledge, and so to bed without let or hindrance.

The distance from Kay's to the town was a mile and a half. If he started at the hour when he should have been starting for the school house he would arrive just in time to see the curtain go up.

Having settled these facts definitely in his mind, he got his books together and went over to school.

"ROT! WHAT'S THE GOOD OF INQUIRIES?"

CHAPTER XV.

DOWN TOWN.

PENN arrived at the theatre a quarter of an hour before the curtain rose. Going down a gloomy alley off the High Street he found himself at the stage door, where he made inquiries of a depressed-looking man with a bad cold in the head as to the whereabouts of his brother. It seemed that he was with Mr. Higgs. If he would wait, said the door-keeper, his name should be sent up. Penn waited, while the door-keeper made polite conversation by describing his symptoms to him in a hoarse growl. Presently the minion who had been despatched to the upper regions with Penn's message returned. Would he go upstairs, third door on the left. Penn followed the instructions, and found himself in a small room, a third of which was filled by a huge iron-bound chest, another third by a very stout man and a dressing-table, while the rest of the space was comparatively empty, being occupied by a wooden chair with three legs. On this seat his brother was trying to balance himself, giving what part of his attention was not required for this feat to listening to some story the fat man was telling him. Penn had heard his deep voice booming as he went up the passage.

His brother did the honours.

"Glad to see you, glad to see you," said Mr. Higgs, for the fat man was none other than that celebrity. "Take a seat."

Fenn sat down on the chest and promptly tore his trousers on a jagged piece of iron.

"These provincial dressing-rooms!" said Mr Higgs, by way of comment. "No room! Never any room! No chairs! Nothing!"

He spoke in short, quick sentences, and gasped between each. Fenn said it really didn't matter—he was quite comfortable.

"Haven't they done anything about it?" asked Fenn's brother, resuming the conversation which Fenn's entrance had interrupted. "We've been having a burglary here," he explained. "Somebody got into the theatre last night through a window. I don't know what they expected to find."

"Why," said Fenn, "we've had a burglar up our way too. Chap broke into the school house and went through the old man's drawing-room. The school house men have been talking about nothing else ever since. I wonder if it's the same crew."

Mr. Higgs turned in his chair, and waved a stick of grease paint impressively to emphasise his point.

"There," he said. "There! What I've been saying all along. No doubt of it. Organised gang. And what are the police doing? Nothing, sir, nothing. Making inquiries. Rot! What's the good of inquiries?"

Fenn's brother suggested mildly that inquiries were a good beginning. You *must* start somehow. Mr. Higgs scouted the idea.

"There ought not to be any doubt, sir. They ought to *know*. To KNOW," he added, with firmness.

At this point there filtered through the closed door the strains of the opening chorus.

"By Jove, it's begun!" said Fenn's brother. "Come on, Bob."

"Where are we going to?" asked Fenn, as he followed. "The wings?"

But it seemed that the rules of Mr. Higgs' company prevented any outsider taking up his position in that desirable quarter. The only place from which it was possible to watch the performance, except by going to the front of the house, was the "flies," situated near the roof of the building.

Fenn found all the pleasures of novelty in watching the players from this lofty position Judged by the cold light of reason it was not the best place from which to see a play. It was possible to gain only a very foreshortened view of the actors. But it was a change after sitting "in front."

The piece was progressing merrily. The gifted author, at first silent and pale, began now to show signs of gratification. Now and again he chuckled as some *jeu de mots* hit the mark and drew a quick gust of laughter from the unseen audience. Occasionally he would nudge Fenn to draw his attention to some good bit of dialogue which was approaching. He was obviously enjoying himself.

The advent of Mr. Higgs completed his satisfaction, for the audience greeted the comedian with roars of applause. As a rule Eckleton took its drama through the medium of third-rate touring companies, which came down with plays that had not managed to attract London to any great extent, and were trying to make up for failures in the metropolis by long tours in the provinces. It was seldom that an actor of the Higgs type paid the town a visit, and in a play, too, which had positively never appeared before on any stage. Eckleton appreciated the compliment.

"Listen," said Fenn's brother. "Isn't that just the part for him? It's just like he was in the dressing-room, eh? Short sentences and everything. The funny part of it is that I didn't know the man when I wrote the play. It was all luck."

Mr. Higgs' performance sealed the success of the piece. The house laughed at everything he said. He sang a song in his gasping way, and they laughed still more. Fenn's brother became incoherent with delight. The verdict of Eckleton was hardly likely to affect London theatre-goers, but it was very pleasant notwithstanding. Like every playwright with his first piece, he had been haunted by the idea that his dialogue "would not act," that, however humorous it might be to a reader, it would fall flat when spoken. There was no doubt now as to whether the lines sounded well.

At the beginning of the second act the great Higgs was not on the stage, Fenn's brother knowing enough of the game not to bring on his big man too soon. He had not to enter for ten minutes or so. The author, who had gone down to see him during the interval, stayed in the dressing-room. Fenn, however, who wanted to see all of the piece that he could, went up to the "flies" again.

It occurred to him when he got there that he would see more if he took the seat which his brother had been occupying. It would give him much the same view of the stage, and a wider view of the audience. He thought it

would be amusing to see how the audience looked from the "flies."

Mr. W. S. Gilbert once wrote a poem about a certain bishop who, while fond of amusing himself, objected to his clergy doing likewise. And the consequence was that whenever he did so amuse himself, he was always haunted by a phantom curate, who joined him in his pleasures, much to his dismay. On one occasion he stopped to watch a Punch and Judy show,

"And heard, as Punch was being treated penally,
That phantom curate laughing all hymenally."

The disgust and panic of this eminent cleric was as nothing compared with that of Fenn, when, shifting to his brother's seat, he got the first clear view he had had of the audience. In a box to the left of the dress-circle sat, "laughing all hymenally," the following distinguished visitors:

Mr. Mulholland of No. 7 College Buildings,
Mr. Raynes of No. 4 ditto,
and
Mr. Kay.

Fenn drew back like a flash, knocking his chair over as he did so.

"Giddy, sir?" said a stage hand, pleasantly. "Bless you, lots of gents is like that when they comes up here. Can't stand the 'eight, they can't. You'll be all right in a jiffy."

"Yes. It—it is rather high, isn't it?" said Fenn. "Awful glare, too."

He picked up his chair and sat down well out of sight of the box. Had they seen him? he wondered. Then common sense returned to him. They could not possibly have seen him. Apart from any other reasons, he had only been in his brother's seat for half a dozen seconds. No. He was all right so far. But he would have to get back to the house, and at once. With three of the staff, including his own housemaster, ranging the town, things were a trifle too warm for comfort. He wondered it had not occurred to him that, with a big attraction at the theatre, some of the staff might feel an inclination to visit it.

He did not stop to say good-bye to his brother. Descending from his perch, he hurried to the stage door.

"It's in the toobs that I feel it, sir," said the door-keeper, as he let him out, resuming their conversation as if they had only just parted. Fenn hurried off without waiting to hear more.

It was drizzling outside, and there was a fog. Not a "London particular," but quite thick enough to make it difficult to see where one was going. People and vehicles passed him, vague phantoms in the darkness. Occasionally the former collided with him. He began to wish he had not accepted his brother's invitation. The unexpected sight of the three masters had shaken his nerve. Till then only the romantic, adventurous side of the expedition had struck him. Now the risks began to loom larger in his mind. It was all very well, he felt, to think, as he had done, that he would be expelled if found out, but that all the same he would risk it. Detection then had seemed a remote contingency. With three masters in the offing it became at least a possibility. The melancholy case of Peter Brown seemed to him now to have a more personal significance for him.

Wrapped in these reflections, he lost his way.

He did not realise this for some time. It was borne in upon him when the road he was taking suddenly came to an abrupt end in a blank wall. Instead of being, as he had fancied, in the High Street, he must have branched off into some miserable blind alley.

More than ever he wished he had not come. Eckleton was not a town that took up a great deal of room on the map of England, but it made up for small dimensions by the eccentricity with which it had been laid out. On a dark and foggy night, to one who knew little of its geography, it was a perfect maze.

Fenn had wandered some way when the sound of someone whistling a popular music-hall song came to him through the gloom. He had never heard anything more agreeable.

"I say," he shouted at a venture, "can you tell me the way to the High Street?"

The whistler stopped in the middle of a bar, and presently Fenn saw a figure sidling towards him in what struck him as a particularly furtive manner.

"Wot's thet, gav'nor?"

"Can you direct me to the High Street? I've lost my way."

The vague figure came closer.

"'Igh Street? Yus; yer go——"

A hand shot out, Fenn felt a sharp wrench in the region of his waistcoat, and a moment later the stranger had vanished into the fog with the prefect's watch and chain.

Fenn forgot his desire to return to the High Street. He forgot everything except that he wished to catch the fugitive, maltreat him, and retrieve his property. He tore in the direction whence came the patter of retreating footsteps.

There were moments when he thought he had him, when he could hear the sound of his breathing. But the fog was against him. Just as

he was almost on his man's heels, the fugitive turned sharply into a street which was moderately well-lighted. Fenn turned after him. He had just time to recognise the street as his goal, the High Street, when somebody, walking unexpectedly out of the corner house, stood directly in his path. Fenn could not stop himself. He charged the man squarely, clutched him to save himself, and they fell in a heap on the pavement.

CHAPTER XVI.

WHAT HAPPENED TO FENN.

FENN was up first. Many years' experience of being tackled at full speed on the football field had taught him how to fall. The stranger, whose football days, if he had ever had any, were long past, had gone down with a crash, and remained on the pavement, motionless. Fenn was conscious of an ignoble impulse to fly without stopping to chat about the matter. Then he was seized with a gruesome fear that he had injured the man seriously, which vanished when the stranger sat up. His first words were hardly of the sort that one would listen to from choice. His first printable expression, which did not escape him until he had been speaking some time, was in the nature of an official bulletin.

"You've broken my neck," said he.

Fenn renewed his apologies and explanations.

"Your watch!" cried the man in a high, cracked voice. "Don't stand there talking about your watch, but help me up. What do I care about your watch? Why don't you look where you are going to? Now then, now then, don't hoist me as if I were a hod of bricks. That's right. Now help me indoors, and go away."

Fenn supported him while he walked lamely into the house. He was relieved to find that there was nothing more the matter with him than a shaking and a few bruises.

"Door on the left," said the injured one.

Fenn led him down the passage and into a small sitting-room. The gas was lit, and as he turned it up he saw that the stranger was a man well advanced in years. He had grey hair that was almost white. His face was not a pleasant one. It was a mass of lines and wrinkles from which a physiognomist would have deduced uncomplimentary conclusions as to his character. Fenn had little skill in that way, but he felt that for some reason he disliked the man, whose eyes, which were small and extraordinarily bright, gave rather an eerie look to his face.

"Go away, go away," he kept repeating savagely from his post on the shabby sofa on which Fenn had deposited him.

HE FELT A SHARP WRENCH AT HIS WAISTCOAT.

"But are you all right? Can't I get you something?" asked the Ecklestonian.

"Go away, go away," repeated the man.

Conversation on these lines could never be really attractive. Fenn turned to go. As he closed the door and began to feel his way along the dark passage, he heard the key turn in

the lock behind him. The man could not, he felt, have been very badly hurt if he were able to get across the room so quickly. The thought relieved him somewhat. Nobody likes to have the maiming even of the most complete stranger on his mind. The sensation of relief lasted possibly three seconds. Then it flashed upon him that in the excitement of the late interview he had forgotten his cap. That damaging piece of evidence lay on the table in the sitting-room, and between him and it was a locked door.

He groped his way back, and knocked. No sound came from the room.

"I say," he cried, "you might let me have my cap. I left it on the table."

No reply.

Fenn half thought of making a violent assault on the door. He refrained on reflecting that it would be useless. If he could break it open—which, in all probability, he could not—there would be trouble such as he had never come across in his life. He was not sure it would not be an offence for which he would be rendered liable to fine or imprisonment. At any rate, it would mean the certain detection of his visit to the town. So he gave the thing up, resolving to return on the morrow and reopen negotiations. For the present, what he had to do was to get safely back to his house. He had lost his watch, his cap with his name in it was in the hands of an evil old man who evidently bore him a grudge, and he had to run the gauntlet of three housemasters and get to bed *viâ* a study-window. Few people, even after the dullest of plays, have returned from the theatre so disgusted with everything as did Fenn. Reviewing the situation as he ran with long, easy strides over the road that led to Kay's, he found it devoid of any kind of comfort. Unless his mission in quest of the cap should prove successful, he was in a tight place.

It is just as well that the gift of second sight is accorded to but few. If Fenn could have known at this point that his adventures were only beginning, that what had taken place already was but as the overture to a drama, it is possible that he would have thrown up the sponge for good and all, entered Kay's by way of the front door—after knocking up the entire household—and remarked, in answer to his housemaster's excited questions, "Enough! Enough! I am a victim of Fate, a Toad beneath the Harrow. Sack me to-morrow, if you like, but for goodness' sake let me get quietly to bed now."

As it was, not being able to "peep with security into futurity," he imagined that the worst was over.

He began to revise this opinion immediately on turning in at Kay's gate. He had hardly got half-way down the drive when the front door opened and two indistinct figures came down the steps. As they did so his foot slipped off the grass border on which he was running to deaden the noise of his steps, and grated sharply on the gravel.

"What's that?" said a voice. The speaker was Mr. Kay.

"What's what?" replied a second voice, which he recognised as Mr. Mulholland's.

"Didn't you hear a noise?"

"'I heard the water lapping on the crag,'" replied Mr. Mulholland, poetically.

"It was over there," persisted Mr. Kay. "I am certain I heard something—positively certain, Mulholland. And after that burglary at the school house——"

He began to move towards the spot where Fenn lay crouching behind a bush. Mr. Mulholland followed, mildly amused. They were a dozen yards away when Fenn, debating in his mind whether it would not be better—as it would certainly be more dignified—for him to rise and deliver himself up to justice instead of waiting to be discovered wallowing in the damp grass behind a laurel bush, was aware of something soft and furry pressing against his knuckles. A soft purring sound reached his ears.

He knew at once who it was—Thomas Edward, the matron's cat, ever a staunch friend of his. Many a time had they taken tea together in his study in happier days. The friendly animal had sought him out in his hiding-place, and was evidently trying to intimate that the best thing they could do now would be to make a regular night of it.

Fenn, as I have said, liked and respected Thomas. In ordinary circumstances he would not have spoken an unfriendly word to him. But things were desperate now, and needed remedies to match.

Very softly he passed his hand down the delighted animal's back until he reached his tail. Then, stifling with an effort all the finer feelings which should have made such an act impossible, he administered so vigorous a tweak to that appendage that Thomas, with one frenzied yowl, sprang through the bush past the two masters and vanished at full speed into the opposite hedge.

"My goodness!" said Mr. Kay, starting back.

It was a further shock to Fenn to find how close he was to the laurel.

"'Goodness me,
Why, what was that?
Silent be,
It was the cat,'"

chanted Mr. Mulholland, who was in poetical vein after the theatre.

"It was a cat!" gasped Mr. Kay.

"So I am disposed to imagine. What lungs! We shall be having the R.S.P.C.A. down on us if we aren't careful. They must have heard that noise at the headquarters of the Society, wherever they are. Well, if your zeal for big game hunting is satisfied, and you don't propose to follow the vocalist through that hedge, I think I will be off. Good-night. Good piece, wasn't it?"

"Excellent. Good-night, Mulholland."

"By the way, I wonder if the man who wrote it is a relation of our Fenn. It may be his brother—I believe he writes. You probably remember him when he was here. He was before my time. Talking of Fenn, how do you find the new arrangement answer? Is Kennedy an improvement?"

"MY GOODNESS!" SAID MR. KAY.

"Kennedy," said Mr. Kay, "is a well-meaning-boy, I think. Quite well-meaning. But he lacks ability, in my opinion. I have had to speak to him on several occasions on account of disturbances amongst the juniors. Once I found two boys actually fighting in the junior day-room. I was very annoyed about it."

"And where was Kennedy while this was going on? Was he holding the watch?"

"The watch?" said Mr. Kay, in a puzzled tone of voice. "Kennedy was over at the gymnasium when it occurred."

"Then it was hardly his fault that the fight took place."

"My dear Mulholland, if the head of a house is efficient, fights should be impossible. Even when he is not present his influence, his prestige, so to speak, should be sufficient to restrain the boys under him."

Mr. Mulholland whistled softly.

"So that's your idea of what the head of your house should be like, is it? Well, I know of one fellow who would have been just your man. Unfortunately he is never likely to come to school at Eckleton."

"Indeed?" said Mr. Kay, with interest. "Who is that? Where did you meet him? What school is he at?"

"I never said I had met him. I only go by what I have heard of him. And as far as I know he is not at any school. He was a gentle-

man of the name of Napoleon Bonaparte. He might just have been equal to the arduous duties which devolve upon the head of your house. Good-night."

And Fenn heard his footsteps crunch the gravel as he walked away. A minute later the front door shut, and there was a rattle. Mr. Kay had put the chain up and retired for the night.

Fenn lay where he was for a short while longer. Then he rose, feeling very stiff and wet, and crept into one of the summer-houses which stood in Mr. Kay's garden. Here he sat for an hour and a half, at the end of which time, thinking that Mr. Kay must be asleep, he started out to climb into the house.

His study was on the first floor. A high garden-seat stood directly beneath the window and acted as a convenient ladder. It was easy to get from this on to the window-ledge. Once there he could open the window, and the rest would be plain sailing.

Unhappily, there was one flaw in his scheme. He had conceived that scheme in the expectation that the window would be as he had left it.

But it was not.

During his absence somebody had shot the bolt. And, try his hardest, he could not move the sash an inch.

(To be continued.)

A JAPANESE GIANT'S DINNER.

[From "The Japs at Home," by Douglas Sladen.]

THE giant, who was very genial, and most handsomely dressed in a dark blue silk kimono, insisted upon going last. What a handsome fellow he was, with his huge shoulders and massive head, his hair done in the orthodox wrestlers' fashion, and his vast good-humoured face bronzed by the sun to the true Giorgione tint! His shapely, exquisitely kept hands were the same tint; so were his feet, as beautifully formed as his hands, and bare, except for light straw sandals. We had fortunately hardly sat down to lunch before Mr. Boner turned up, and introduced himself (since we were unable to introduce him) with the becoming civilities. He was soon followed by Mr. Landor. We had

A Special Menu Card

in Japanese, prepared for our wrestler, but it did not convey any idea to him, because he had never tasted the things mentioned.

"He wishes to say," translated Mr. Boner, who sat next to him, "that this is the first time that he has been asked to such a banquet, and, not knowing any of the things, he thinks that, if you will not be angry, he will take them all."

He held the soup plate up to his mouth, and shovelled the soup into it as the coolies shovel rice or macaroni from the little lacquer bowls at the street stalls, and polished off the fish in a couple of mouthfuls. He judged that his mouth could contain about half of it, so he cut it in half and put in half at once. And in the interval he disposed of two glasses of hock and a glass of beer. Then he conversed.

"He wishes to say," interpreted Mr. Boner, "that he thanks you extremely for the fine banquet you are giving him. He has never had anything like it in his life."

This I have put on record, because it is probably the most favourable opinion ever expressed of a Tokio hotel luncheon. For, though it is one of the best of the hotels kept by natives, the catering is not a matter of universal congratulation. But it is very home-like, and we have a most obliging lot of servants. Then

He went through the Bill-of-Fare

in the following swimming fashion :—

No. 3. Poached eggs and anchovy toast—one mouthful.

No. 4. Pigeon sauté and green peas—two mouthfuls, because there were bones. He, of course, ate bones and all.

No. 5. Mutton chop and mashed potatoes—the chop, one mouthful. He held it by the bone, and bit off the whole of the meat at once, finishing up with lapping the mashed potatoes like the soup.

No. 6. Cold roast beef. He cut his portion in two, and swallowed it in two mouthfuls.

No. 7. A plateful of ham. He took his instantaneously, as they say in photographic circles.

No. 8. "Teal duck." This gave him rather more trouble. He was helped to a drumstick, and, taking it by the shank, bit off the bulk of the meat at one bite. But masticating the skeleton took him some time.

No. 9. Salt tongue. The boy, seeing that he had a good appetite, brought him several slices. They were treated to the same instantaneous process. And then came the *tour de force*—the curry.

HE ROARED WITH LAUGHTER

to express delight, when it arrived; and, after his already healthy meal, helped himself to the whole, filling his plate mountain high with rice, and emptying the curry tureen over it. Then, holding his plate close to his mouth, he chopsticked it in with his fork, and with tremendous gusto called for more.

"He is beginning to enjoy himself very much," put in Mr. Boner. "He is getting very red in the face, which is a sign. He will probably now begin to divest himself of his clothing, piece by piece, to steel himself to fresh exertions."

This, added to the fact that he had already drunk a bottle of hock and nearly two quarts of beer, and that there were ladies at the table, made me feel a little cautious. So I told the boys, in English, to start giving him coffee, but he waved them off majestically. Evidently his arena triumphs were not the outcome of temperance, for he told Mr. Boner that he never took such things as tea or coffee, and that he really did prefer sake a good deal to what he had been drinking. Accordingly, sake was sent for; but the Tokio Hotel, being a Japanese hotel conducted in the European fashion, was not going to lose caste by keeping the Japanese native drink, so the poor giant had to put up with another bottle of beer to wash down a second dishful of curry and rice. Probably he would have taken a third had not the supply run out.

No. 11 was chocolate pudding. He did not put the whole of it into his mouth at once, but sipped it. Evidently he entertained suspicions, which were realised when he had tasted it, for he put on a sickly sort of grin.

Would he have No. 12—cheese? No. 13—fruit? or No. 14—tea and coffee?

No! these were things he did not esteem.

Mr. Boner then, with imperturbable gravity,

OFFERED HIM THE CHUTNEY JAR,

with a spoon. He tasted it, and his mouth expanded into a fresh grin of delight. He ate it all as an entremet, and wound up the feast by draining the finger-bowl of hot water which the "boy" brought to wash his lordly fingers after his arduous repast. There were always about three "boys" hanging round the hotel, for to the Japanese lower order wrestlers are of as much consequence as the baseball player to the Bostonian.

"He thanks you for your magnificent banquet," interpreted Mr. Boner, "and hopes you are not angry at him consuming so much. He has never had anything of the kind before—I am leaving out the honorifics and superlatives. Shall I tell him you are so pleased with his company that you would like him to spend the rest of the day with you?"

"I will kill you if you do. I'll hire a Chinese high-binder from Yokohama. Seriously; invent some excuse to get rid of him soon after lunch."

"All right. My pony is at the door, and I shall have to go myself in a few minutes; and then I'll tell him that at this time it is customary for Europeans to take their leave. He will go directly; the Japanese are very gentlemanly—down to the very lowest."

So we gave the big wrestler

A BIG CIGAR,

and took him upstairs to be photographed, with my little boy standing beside him to show off his monstrous size; and then he took his leave, after telling Mr. Landor that he would be sure to come and call upon him to have his portrait painted, and again expressing his delight with everything.

It appears that it was fortunate that he was not master of English, for he remarked to Mr. Boner of a gentleman who was sitting within a yard of him that he was so thin that he felt sure that he must lead a very good life. He thought that I must lead a very irregular one

I had a very fine figure, because I was so burly. I had previously considered myself stout, and my figure one to be kept out of evidence. But seeing the Japanese wrestlers has resurrected my conceit, for the thinnest in the tournament leaves me nowhere, and they really think Europeans very badly made for not oftener being fat. One man's poison is truly another man's meat. Just as the giant was going away he apologised once more, as he reasonably might have done if it had been to the hotel proprietor, who, of course, only charged for him as an ordinary visitor. His excuse was that he had never before "introduced such good food to his system."

CHRISTMAS EVE IN THE DARK ROOM.

By Archibald Williams.

IT is Christmas Eve, and I mean to pass the later hours of the evening—when little boys and girls have already long hung out their stockings—in the seclusion of my dark room, to see what good Santa Claus will send *me* in the way of luck.

It happened that a few days ago I found a plate box, bearing the ominous word "Undeveloped" on the cover. Nothing more; no notes or dates; just enough to remind me that at some time or other I must have put off the second important stage of making a photograph.

Now, I rather like, by way of a change, to be uncertain as to the antecedents of a plate. There is just a spice of romance about its creamy face winking at you from the box, and inviting you to call forth life from the blank surface by the nineteenth century magic of development. Assuming that, as in my case, you only know one fact—viz., that each plate has been exposed—think of the possibilities that may lurk in that silver-laden film: a landscape, or a group, or a stirring incident, or some scene that will awaken a host of pleasant memories! Of course, had I been *quite* as systematic as I should, these plates ought not to have drifted into a backwater of forgottenness. But such things will happen in the best regulated dark room

My First Care

is to get my dark-room lamp in proper order. This is no elaborate ruby affair, but a mere hand-lamp, surrounded by a cylinder of threefold orange fabric. I have taken the precaution to

Attach to the Ceiling Above the Lamp

a large square of the same material, so that any reflected light may be "safe." I find orange light very much more pleasant to work by than red, and even fast plates are not harmed by it, provided that ordinary precautions be taken. These are: to keep the light as subdued as is consistent with being able to watch the behaviour of the plate during the early stages of development, and to have the dish well shaded when the time for examination has passed. I once, as an experiment, exposed part of a Special Rapid plate to the large orange window of my dark room (in which I could clearly distinguish every object) for a minute, and developed, with the result that no visible difference between the exposed and unexposed parts could be detected. I believe in

Safe Light and Plenty of It,

so that you can easily find anything you may want, and regard with semi-horror the portable folding ruby lamp (which is useful enough for mere plate changing).

My lamp being turned down to medium brightness, I now arrange the plates in their box, film side upwards, and replace the cover. Then I get out three small glasses and mix as many solutions: A for testing (weak); B, normal; C, for over-exposure.

My developer, by the way, is pyro soda, and these are the proportions:—

A. Pyro solution, one part; soda, one part; water, two parts.
B. Pyro, one part; soda, one part.
C. Pyro, four parts; soda, one part; water, two parts; five drops ten per cent. bromide solution to each ounce of mixture. (Ten per cent.=ten by weight of chemical to 100 of water.)

The next thing for me to do is to put on

MY RUBBER GLOVES,

which cost 5s. 6d., and save my fingers from the dread pyro stain (that would otherwise disfigure the nails for weeks), and thus remove the one serious objection to this excellent developer.

In the sink are placed three dishes, white, red, and black respectively. The topmost plate is now extracted from the box, laid in white, and flooded with solution A. At this stage I pick up the dish and, rocking it gently, turn my back to the light. *Never let solutions* (hypo excepted) *remain stagnant on a plate.*

At the end of a minute there is nothing apparent but the merest suggestions of a sky, so I transfer the plate to red dish, and dose it with solution B. Steady on, my friend; you're coming out a bit *too* fast now. Under the tap with you for a moment; and, swish! Solution C has you on approval. That's better; now the "high lights" (*i.e.*, black portions) come out from the white background, outlines slowly form, unite, and merge into what on earth is the subject? People, but who? Masts, where from? Now I have it. I am in July, back at dear, sleepy little Devonshire Appledore, sung of by Charles Kingsley as the port whence many a bold Elizabethan sea-rover set out to seek his fortune on the Spanish Main. Yes; here in the middle is my old friend of the drum, castanets, triangle, pipes, &c.—a male version of the Lady of Banbury Cross, *minus* the horse—posing for his picture among the lasses and lads for whom he has just made music with elbows and heels and divers strings attached thereto. The image has developed right through the film, and, therefore, I may safely commit the plate to the fixing bath, while I proceed to negative number two. This was probably taken at Appledore too, so into the C dish it goes at once. Soon there looks upon me a young Naval Reservist, standing beside a large model boat which *he* said he built himself, and another person ascribed to somebody else, and a third man averred to have been made under his very eyes by the Reservist, till I really began to doubt whether Jerome's fishing story had not found a formidable rival.

When my first two negatives are fixed I slip them into a rack and immerse this in a

WASHING BATH,

which really is a bath, one foot wide, 15 inches long, 10 inches deep, and has four small holes pierced through its sides ½-inch above the bottom, so that the chemical deposits may be carried off. Unless some such means of producing a slight through current are employed, the plates do not get the full benefit of the clean water entering the bath at the top.

Resuming development, I evolve a group of Appledore children; the fishing fleet stranded on the mud; a cluster of boys playing marbles; and a squad of Naval Reservists—all over-exposed. My three double dark slides would then have been exhausted, and number seven is therefore tested with solution A. That doesn't work, so B has a turn, and, most appropriately for the Christmas card season, a litter of kittens turns up—all as unlike as only mongrels can be. The little rascals! I remember the hot August day when I perched them on a bar across a gateway with a brick on either side to prevent their escape, while I got the focus. One kitten has managed to move during the exposure (very short), after the manner of the inevitable evil-doer in a human group. Still, a strong negative.

UNDER-EXPOSURE

comes in the eighth venture, which carries me far north into the Forfarshire Sidlaws, a range of hills once known to geography. Solution D is mixed—pyro, one part; soda, three parts; water, two. Patience will now be necessary, as the one chance of success in the case of an under-exposed plate is to let it develop very slowly, rocking the dish continually. Under-exposure is a horrid nuisance, and a regular bane to beginners who do much hand-camera work, especially as the image often before fixation has quite a "plucky" appearance, which fades sadly away in the hypo bath, leaving a "chalk and soot" negative behind it. The great difficulty is that, if the shadows be forced out, the "high lights" faces, &c. become very dense. In this case, therefore, with the dresses of a picnic party coming out very hard on an undeveloped background of furze and broom, I shall have recourse to *local* development.

Taking a pad of cotton-wool in my right hand, I dip it into pure soda solution, and dab it over the shadows, tilting the plate (from which the developer has been poured away) so that

the soda may not stray on to the foreground. This process is continued until a fair amount of detail has appeared; then I fix the image in the hypo.

I am Very Careful

to wash my gloves thoroughly after immersing them in the hypo, as any of this carried to the developing dishes would at once arrest development. Whatever you do, *don't* pour accelerator straight into the dish, or you will give your plate a "black eye." Always pour any added solution into the measure glass, and tip the liquid contents of the dish on top of it. Then the whole may be safely applied to the plate.

Twenty minutes have gone over this plate, but it was worth the trouble, as I couldn't possibly re-stage that jolly afternoon—troubled as it was photographically with evil-looking clouds overhead. Next comes a very fair negative of the construction of the camp-fire to boil the kettle that plays so important a part in an afternoon's outing. I shall improve matters by *intensification*, which will give "body" to the shadows. This process is most effective with negatives that, through over-exposure, lack contrast, but are full of detail, and will be treated of in a future article.

Warm the Dish

over a lamp (if it be a porcelain one) for development of very stubborn under-exposures. The solution will prove much more active if heated until it is tepid, but not warm. Before taking out the plate for good, add some pyro solution to give a little extra density. If it stains the negative slightly all over, so much the better will it be for the printing.

The golden rules in developing are:—Go slow, and feel your way; keep the dishes in motion;

Photo.] THE APPLEDORE BAND. [A. Williams.

be careful to measure solutions accurately, and don't mix "by eye"; don't let the plate be unnecessarily exposed to direct light in the *early* stage of development; don't handle the plate more than necessity demands; wash it very thoroughly after fixation.

Perhaps I ought to have already mentioned my pyro soda formula. Here it is:—

Pyro Solution.		Soda Solution.	
Pyro	½oz.	Sulphite of soda	2oz.
Bromide of Potassium	15grs.	Washing soda.....	2oz.
Metabisulphite of Potassium	12grs.	Water	20oz.
Water	20ozs.		

Whew! The room has become rather oppressive! Let's open the window and listen to the

dear old Christmas bells, sending the old, old message to the world, the message that dates so far back before the time when photography was first thought of. It is late; but Christmas comes once only in the year, so we may spare a few minutes to listen to the merry changes. Then one last look round to see that the plates are all washing properly, and the lamp is blown out, and off to bed I go, mentally wishing all my readers a happy Christmas.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

W. Griffiths.—Thanks for your interesting photo. of the "Floral Temple of Japan," taken at night in the Zoological Gardens, Clifton. I regret that it would not stand reproduction on account of the detail being so faint. The curious movement of the electric lamps must, I think, be due to a shifting of the camera during a part of the exposure—probably only a small fraction, which would be sufficient to impress the brilliant light of the lamps on the plate without blurring the detail of the other portions of the structure. The movement must have been jerky.

"**H. R.**" asks how best to glaze P.O.P. prints. The most usual way is to squeegee them down on to ferrotype plates (price about 4d. each) which have been prepared by rubbing them over with salad oil. The oil must be wiped off with a clean rag. The wet prints are then spread face downwards over the plate (the black, shiny side), and rolled with a squeegee until every trace of an air-bubble has been worked out. They are then left to dry, and peel off naturally, leaving a high gloss. Some folk use plate glass instead of the enamelled iron plates; but the latter are preferable as being cheaper and less breakable, though care must be taken to prevent their getting bent. Your photograph is very good for a beginner, H. R., and I wish you good luck. Read my articles carefully, and you will get on.

Gladys Marsh.—Yes! a No. 2 Brownie would suit you admirably. As to your question, "Do you think I would understand it, &c.?", is the Photographic Fag also among the prophets? I am sure you will, nevertheless, for the fact that you take in THE CAPTAIN is proof of common-sense, and your appreciation of the magazine a sign of good taste. (Hear! hear!) Perhaps you will let me see a photo or two when you get to work.

F. A. Cameron.—Evidently you do not get an exposure if your films come out blank in development; that is to say, provided the light is anything but extremely weak. You don't say what sort of a camera you use: sometimes a film-*pack* fails to act, and then the reason is obvious. Possibly you moved on more than one film at a time, or the shutter didn't work.

A. W. Robinson.—"How much would it cost to make a dark room like that described in the October number?" Well, that's a matter rather hard to decide. If you had to build a separate room on to the house, I daresay £40 would "go bang" before you had finished, or even more. If you merely have to fit up an existing room, and can do carpentering, a five-pound note should cover everything; though here again the water supply is an unknown item. Of one thing I am certain, that in a proper room you can do work that is almost impossible where plentiful water is absent. The expensive items are the sink and the water "waste." The rest—well, say £2. As for your second question, there are several good guinea cameras offered in the advertisement pages of the July number.

R. H. B.—Don't be down-hearted; your photos are not at all bad, and the particulars given on the back of each show that you are systematic—a great virtue in a photographer. The camera is a good one, and you can't beat Pyro Soda developer. Now for criticisms: Stoke Poges church, under-exposed. Lake (Langley Park?), rather ditto, Gerrard's Cross church, over-exposed; Jordans, ditto; Burnham Beeches pool, right, but needs intensification; G.W.R. engine, rather over-exposed, and seems to have been taken against the sun, instead of with sun at your back. See my remarks on development in this number. No! stripped films worthless. Paste-on mounts are preferable to slip-in. Pyro Soda is *not* good for developing Velox prints, as they would probably be stained thereby. hydrokinone best. The spots are caused by air-bubbles forming on the plates *after* the developer has been poured on. Rub the films over quickly with a pad of cotton-wool immediately the solution has covered them. Always pleased to answer questions of this sort.

Joan Sterling.—All your films have been fogged by white light. One thickness of fabric over the window would not be safe if the light is at all strong outside, and even double quantity would not avail if the edges allow white light to get through. In a Frena camera only the front film and those at the bottom can possibly have been exposed. If the films are not arranged quite correctly—with the notches corresponding in all *alternate* films—there will be a block. (Haven't you got a book of instructions?) The film-packs are supposed to be properly set when they leave the factory; but I always look them through to make quite certain before putting them into the camera.

TALES OF THE FAR WEST.

By FRANKLIN WELLES CALKINS,

Author of "Across the Wilderness," &c.

No. 10.—THE BLIND COUGAR.

IT was a good day for deer-hunting. Two or three inches of snow had fallen, and the air seemed soft and heavy, as it does before a storm. We determined to utilise the favourable weather for the killing of our winter meat. Therefore, at about sunrise, my partner, Curtis, our Indian helper, Pete Dobaw, and myself set out from our shack to make a circuit of the nearer hills.

In 1875 this rough Black Hills country abounded in big game—elk, deer, sheep, grizzlies, black bears, and mountain-lions. On that November day, at one o'clock or a little later, I had killed and hung up four blacktails and one cottontail buck. Then, in close pursuit of a wounded doe among a rough tumble of rock ledges, a serious accident befell me. Hot upon the trail, I was pushing through an undergrowth of cedar, when I burst from cover upon a precipitous slope and fell headlong. I dropped my gun upon the snow, and grasped in vain at bush and boulder to stay my downward flight. I pitched down an incline, rolled over and over, and dropped off the rim of a ledge some fifteen or twenty feet in height.

For some time I lay paralysed, physically, by the shock of my fall. My face lay on the edge of a narrow shelf of rock, and one of my arms overhung it. I had no power to retire from this perilous position, yet with a curious sense of helpless indifference I looked down into a black and dismal gully which I knew well was the "hidden cañon," as we had named it, of Spring Creek.

It was from twelve to twenty feet in width—a huge split between two masses of rock—and must have been nearly one hundred feet to the bottom. A small stream leaped and tumbled through the boulder-filled channel.

So narrow was the cleft where I lay that an active man could have leaped it at a running jump. On the opposite side was a mass of rocks rounding off to the left, and below this a rough, narrow slope along the rim of the notch.

"A poor place to look for deer," was my thought, and there was little likelihood of my hunting companions finding me soon, unless I could send my shouts to their ears. But as yet I had no voice for shouting.

At the end of half an hour the paralysis of my nerves had partially abated, and I succeeded in rolling myself over and gaining a reclining posture against the ledge. In so doing, I discovered that my right shoulder was dislocated and that probably two of my ribs were cracked. I found that I was upon a shelf of rock some thirty feet in length and not more than seven or eight in width.

Still, nothing seemed to matter greatly, and when presently a gust of wind whirled by and great feathery flakes began dropping spirally into the notch, I felt a lethargic sense of indifference.

From this hazy condition I was roused by seeing a great reddish yellow beast come out of a cleft in the rocks just across the narrow cañon. It was a mountain-lion of large size, and it paused upon the slope with uplifted head and pricked ears, apparently listening and looking away toward the higher ground.

Now, for the first time since I had fallen, I felt a thrill of fear. If the big cat were hungry, how easily it might leap the gully and devour me where I lay! Most fervently I hoped the creature might trot away beyond the rocks.

But the lion turned its head and seemed to be looking directly at me. It walked deliberately down to the edge of the cleft, and for an instant I thought my time had come.

Still the animal showed no sign of having seen me. On the contrary, it turned immediately to one side, and began trotting back and forth in front of its lair. It travelled over a beat of some forty yards or more, wheeling with precision at the same point in each turn, and going over its path each time with precisely the same movement—a shuffling, gliding trot.

It thus passed and repassed within ten or twelve yards of where I lay. And now, with awakened faculties, I discovered that this big male lion was blind. Instead of the yellow-green balls within cruel slits there were two prominent greyish-white discs under its half-closed lids.

It was a blind cougar out for exercise. Surely, with the notch between us, there could be little danger from this unfortunate beast! Fascinated, curious, and forgetting my helpless condition, I watched the lithe, powerful, enormous cat promenading his beat—a path which he had doubtless trodden many thousands of times. Just so many steps in one direction, just so many back over the same line. At one point he avoided a projecting boulder; at another passed round a broken cedar sapling. He swung himself back and forth with the regularity of a pendulum stroke.

Here, despite his infirmity, was no caged, hampered, and rod-beaten creature of the menagerie. By some means the blind lion had been well kept. His red-yellow coat was sleek and handsome, and his great muscles moved and glided over each other like well-oiled parts of perfect machinery. He dropped his lower jaw now and then, and once gave a mighty yawn, displaying rows of fangs which might have rent the skin of an alligator. Once only he halted upon his beat to sharpen his claws upon a sandrock, and his great claws rasped and grated upon the stone in a horribly suggestive fashion. I rejoiced, indeed, that he was blind. And so I lay watching, while the big panther glided back and forth, and the whirling snowflakes slipped off his glossy coat and padded the path for his feet.

And now again the wind whirled by in eddying gusts, flinging snowflakes and dry leaves across the notch; and out of a cross current nearly in front of his lair the lion caught my scent!

Instantly the gliding, graceful figure was transformed, and a fierce, snarling beast reared upon its hind feet, sniffing in eager anxiety to find the prey. The lion whirled about several times, then made a leap to the right, then directly toward me. Then he lost the scent and crouched, his red muzzle quivering, his ears twitching curiously, while his tail whipped to and fro.

Now he rose again and moved, sniffing cautiously along the rim of the gully. He seemed to reason that the scented creature must have shifted its position. Again his nose took wind of me, and crouching, he sniffed down at the gaping cut as if to make sure of the direction. Then, as his ears were laid flat and his yellow claws were unsheathed to take firm grip upon the rock, I gave myself up for lost

With his snarls menacing me and growing louder and louder, I knew the creature was certain of his ground. He had not been blind always and had leaped many times to the shelf where I lay. Horror-stricken, I watched him gather himself, and then vault in a sweeping curve above the chasm and alight upon the rocks within four or five steps of where I lay.

I expected instant death. My nerves were suddenly racked with cutting pains, which ran through my chest until I gasped for breath. And yet the snarling, sniffing lion did not spring upon me. He had jumped to windward of me, and the air currents no longer carried the scent. He reared again upon his hind feet, sniffing anxiously. Then to my joy his bristles lowered, his savage aspect changed to one of distrust,

and he turned and leaped back across the cut.

He stood upon the brink for a moment in a listening attitude of suspicion, and then, trotting away, disappeared within his lair.

It was now snowing very fast, and in the next few minutes, relieved of intense reacting pains, I did some hard thinking. I dared not shout to attract the attention of my fellow-hunters, and I was in momentary fear of a reappearance of the puma, or, worse yet, of its mate.

The weather was warm, hardly at the freezing-point, and I was warmly clothed. I might, I concluded, survive twenty-four hours and longer if let alone by the lions; and long before that time Curtis and Pete would be scouring the hills for me. Camp was not more than two miles distant. I decided to lie quiet in the snow until I should hear some sound of searching.

Within half an hour the wisdom of this course was made apparent. Then I saw, coming down out of the storm upon the far slope, two more red-yellow beasts, which soon proved to be the blind lion's mate and her well-grown cub.

I shrank in fear under my covering of snow. Some taint of my presence there was yet in the notch, for both the lions paused, at twenty steps or so, and snarled angrily, with bristling backs and nervous twitchings of their tails.

For a moment the two seemed to be glaring straight at me, and I closed my eyes in fearful suspense. I waited, hardly breathing for some seconds; then, hearing no more of the cougars, I looked again, to find that they had passed on and gone into their lair. It was but a moment, however, before they reappeared. This time the blind male was with them. The three passed together up the slope in lithe, long jumps, and went over the ridge beyond. There had been a kill somewhere, and the blind lion's mate and cub had come dutifully to conduct him to the feast.

SUDDENLY HE SPRANG INTO THE ABYSS.

Under safer circumstances, I should have felt the keenest interest in this evidence of family devotion among fierce beasts, and, with perfect opportunity, I should have hesitated to kill either the dam or her cub. As it was, I was to witness something very like a tragedy.

The lions had been gone a half-hour, perhaps, when I heard the booming crack, crack, of a rifle just over the rock ridge in front of me. I answered the shots with a halloo as lusty as I could give and hitched

myself to a more conspicuous posture against the ledge. I shouted again and again—a rather feeble wail, but loud enough to be heard at a considerable distance.

Then, as if by magic, I was confronted by the three lions, which had slid down an inward curve of the rock ledge upon my left. They advanced in great bounds to within fifteen or twenty yards of my perch. There, catching sight of me, the two foremost came to a halt, and united their voices in menace It was easy to see that something exciting and unusual had happened to the puma family. The blind one, apparently cowed by his helplessness, slunk to his cavern, muttering hoarsely as he ran. Despite their savage demonstrations, the dam and her cub did not attack

Some new fear seemed to possess them. They whirled about repeatedly, to guard against surprises. They flung themselves upon the snow, and lashed their tails excitedly.

I understood that some one—Curtis or Pete, doubtless—had been shooting at them. Perhaps for the first time they had heard the thunder of a gun and the hissing whine of bullets.

Then a rifle cracked again, this time close at hand, and I saw the cougar dam flatten out upon the snow with a bullet through her brain. The cub bounced about wildly, spitting and hissing, until two or three more shots were fired, when it, too, dropped in its tracks, dead. Looking in the direction of the firing, I saw our Indian, Pete, searching for a way to descend the ledge.

While Pete was hunting for a path the blind lion ran out of his lair, which he must have considered unsafe against the new foe. The beast showed intense excitement. He stopped over the bodies of his dead mate and cub and sniffed at them in apparent great anxiety. Then his tail drooped and his hair shrank upon his skin. A great fear had seized him. Suddenly he uttered a strange, whining lament, sprang toward the cañon cleft and leaped into its abyss.

Was it a case of suicide? It has always seemed so to me, and yet, in his sudden sense of loss, in his great fear and excitement, the creature may have had no other aim than mad flight, and may have gone to his death quite by accident.

I was as much overjoyed as Pete was astonished at our meeting. Before noon the Indian had hung up a deer on the ridge, and when he returned to get the meat he found that the three lions had torn down the carcase and were consuming it. He fired and missed, and as the lions ran he had followed, shooting at them as long as they were in sight.

By making a strenuous effort I found that I could stand on my feet, but I was not released from my shelf until the Indian had procured an axe and bridged the gulch with poles.

BURNS.

A fire of fierce and laughing light
That clove the shuddering heart of night,
Leapt earthward, and the thunder's might
That pants and yearns
Made fitful music round its flight;
And earth saw Burns.

. . . . . .

Above the storms of praise and blame
That blur with mist his lustrous name,
His thunderous laughter went and came,
And lives and flies;
The roar that follows on the flame
When lightning dies.

Earth and the snow-dimmed heights of air,
And water winding soft and fair
Through still sweet places, bright and bare,
By bent and byre,
Taught him what hearts within them were;
But his was fire

A. C. SWINBURNE.

THE CYCLING CORNER.

MOTOR-CYCLING.

IN January and February—often in March as well—when Jack Frost is about, or the east wind is having an innings, a good many cyclists suffer from cold extremities. The hands are particularly susceptible, on account of their exposed and rigid position. If you have an average circulation, a pair of leather gauntlet gloves, which overlap the ends of your sleeves, will put matters right. If you cannot rise to such heights of luxury, try a pair of old kid gloves underneath a pair of woollen, and

FASTEN UP YOUR SLEEVES WITH TROUSER CLIPS,

so as to exclude chilly blasts. At the wrist the blood comes very near the surface, and if chilled there has naturally little chance of warming the hands. I would rather ride with a pair of thick mittens on my wrists and exposed fingers, than have my fingers covered and my wrists bare.

Very possibly you find that your toes approach freezing point more nearly than is comfortable. This arises, as likely as not, from insufficient protection to the ankles and legs. There is a lot of satisfaction to be got out of a pair of real silk socks, worn below your stockings.

The body needs special attention; a thick woollen waistcoat or jersey cannot be beaten, except by one with an additional lining of cosy red flannel. Sometimes you may find yourself warming to your work rather more than is pleasant; but this condition is far preferable to a sensation of having had the eiderdown pulled off o' nights by an enemy.

Our ears, on which some of us pride ourselves, and which are peculiarly happy hunting-grounds for chilblains, should also be cared for. If the wind is unusually keen, discard appearances, and tie a neatly folded handkerchief round the head and under the chin. You may require your largest cap to go over it; but what matter?

The mouth, in the case of people afflicted with delicate throats, should not be left unguarded. The exertion of cycling tends to make one ride open-mouthed to get more oxygen, and the deep draughts of cold air taken in with every breath may prove very harmful. A woollen, silk-lined mouth-protector, kept in place by an elastic band round the head, will help to heat the air, and will also protect the parts where toothache grows.

I have made the above remarks because I often see young people riding about in the winter

BLUE AND PINCHED-LOOKING,

though their external appearance otherwise suggests that the articles mentioned might be provided without breaking the family exchequer. Mollycoddling is one thing; ordinary prudence quite another.

THE CYCLE SHOWS.

Nowadays a cycle show pure and simple may be said not to exist. For, whereas the pedicycle has settled down into a practically stereotyped form as regards its general construction and shape, the motor, its great rival, is still changing the details of its mechanism from month to month. Consequently, "cycle *and* motor show" is the fashion; and from some shows any vehicle not motor-driven is excluded. Anyone who paid a visit to the recent Stanley Show at the Agricultural Hall must have

been struck by the many types of motor-cycles there exhibited—two-wheeled, three-wheeled, and four-wheeled. Five years ago there were but two or three makes on the market: now almost every cycle firm of repute turns out its own special brand; while quite a large number of companies have been formed for the express purpose of manufacturing motor-cycles.

The increase in the number of these busy little engines during the last three years has been such as to make it apparent that for the multitude

THE MOTOR-CYCLE IS THE LOCOMOTIVE OF THE FUTURE.

In 1901 people used to stand and watch the motor-cycle out of sight, with an expression on their faces betraying mixed amusement and astonishment. To-day few persons take the trouble to turn their heads to look at one. You meet the motor-cycle everywhere, in crowded London streets—ridden most dexterously by newspaper boys—on the great high-roads, in sequestered bye-ways—in short, wherever you would expect to see a "push-bike." Thousands of cyclists have tasted the joys of motor-cycling, and communicated their enthusiasm to thousands more; and it is the suspicion that a good number of CAPTAIN readers either are motor-cyclists, or would be such if they could, that has caused me to leave the beaten pedi-cycle track in this article.

KEEP YOR EARS WARM IN VERY COLD WEATHER; AND PROTECT YOUR MOUTH, IF YOU HAVE A DELICATE CHEST OR THROAT.

CONSIDERED AS A PIECE OF MECHANISM

the motor-bicycle is a wonderful contrivance. A diminutive engine, almost small enough to crowd into a hat-box, is attached to a fifty-pound cycle frame and wheels; fitted with three or four special levers, a small storage battery, an intensity coil, and a tank holding a gallon of spirit—and there you have a servant which will carry you willingly up hill as well as down for a hundred miles or more, if you only play the right tune on those levers. Supposing that a man had told me, ten years ago, that in the present year of grace we should take a combination of three horse-power and a hundredweight as a matter of course, well, I should have been within my rights in referring him to the Horse Marines.

THE COST OF MOTOR-CYCLING.

Expense is the counterpoise against which every new sport must be weighed before it can be accepted of the people. Though motor-cycling as a pastime is a lusty child, it is still a child; and, at first sight, rather an expensive one to maintain. Fortunately, as it grows older its ailments diminish in number; and the increasing mechanical perfection of the high-speed motor brings with it a greater freedom from those "breakdowns" which have given the sport a rather bad name in the past. To-day a first-class mount costs about £40. But there is a decided tendency towards a general fall in prices. Mr. Henry Norman, M.P., who speaks with authority, prophesies the speedy advent of the day when a good, handy motor-cycle will be listed at £25. At present the makers are to a great extent experimenting—a very costly process. When the types have been standarised, and machinery turns out the various parts by the thousand, competition will doubtless lead to the desired—from the purchaser's point of view—result. So cheer up! readers who regard a motor cycle as a small fortune on wheels. It wasn't so long ago that a first-class "push-bike" cost £20 and upwards. Couldn't be made for less, said the makers; but it is—for two-thirds of the money.

THE JOYS OF MOTOR-CYCLING

are great. Take my word for it. Until you have bestridden the modern Pegasus you don't know what a small journey fifty miles can be. I remember in my school-days reading a fascinating bit of prose in a "Reader" about the Frigate Bird, the pirate of the ocean birds, which breakfasts at the Cape, lunches five hundred miles away and goes to bed in America or the East Indies. With a trusty motor between your knees you begin to understand the Frigate Bird's roving propensities. In London for your morning eggs and bacon; in Hampshire for your bread and cheese; and in Somerset before the dinner-bell rings—that

is the motoring counterpart of the bird's flight. Of course there are times when that mysterious "something" goes wrong, and you spend a strenuous hour overhauling springs and terminals and valves. But I believe some one once spoke about the *delightful* uncertainties of cricket. Every time you put the "something" right, you feel that you have advanced in practical mechanics.

THE RANGE OF THE MOTOR-CYCLE

is, of course, much greater than that of a pedicycle. If you wish to visit a place fifty miles away and be back before dark, even when the days are long and the roads good, you have to rise betimes and pedal very diligently. Before the feat has been accomplished you conclude that such a ride is not to be undertaken rashly, or with your legs in an untrained condition. One big dose like this lasts a long time. The motor-cyclist can pretty accurately figure out the time needed; he takes the distance, divides it by the average speed of his machine, and the answer is there. At the end of the run he is physically fresh, and able to enjoy what he sees, instead of having to sit round to recuperate his forces for the return journey.

Now, I am not going to say a word against our dear old friend, the "pusher," which will always retain its peculiar advantages. The motorist, carried away by the exhilaration of swift movement, gets but a very general idea of the scenery through which he moves, and doubtless misses many a charming view or interesting object. Something has to be sacrificed, whatever be your mode of travel. After the novelty of the sport has worn off you are less averse to stopping now and then to look about, if touring; but, on the other hand, you use your motor more and more as a mere locomotive to "get you there," when you become accustomed to visiting friends at a distance.

FOR CROSS-COUNTRY WORK

the motor-cycle is seen at its best. Thus, suppose I wish to go from Beaconsfield to Guildford and back, and don't feel equal to seventy miles of pedalling. The alternative is to get to Windsor—somehow—and take the train for the rest of the journey, a matter of sixty to ninety minutes of very deliberate railway progress. So two to two and a-half hours are swallowed up, and there may still remain a fifteen-minute walk at the other end. The return journey must be arranged to suit the time-table; I am not a "free agent." On a motor-cycle I have done the distance each way from door to door in an hour and three-quarters, been able to start when I liked, to return when I liked; and I am a careful rider, respecting corners, vehicles, and other users of the road.

FASTEN UP YOUR SLEEVES WITH TROUSER CLIPS TO KEEP OUT COLD DRAUGHTS.

Those of you who can get to the

CRYSTAL PALACE MOTOR SHOW,

which commences on January 27 and

terminates on February 4, should have a good look at the motor-cycle exhibits. One feature of motoring which recommends it is, that every motorist is obliged to become more or less of a mechanic, and learn things which otherwise might remain Chinese to him till his life's end. As soon as you can appreciate the details of a motor, a visit to a big Show is a valuable addition to one's general education.

In future articles I hope to include paragraphs relating to the construction, management, and care of the "pocket automobile."

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

A. C. Doig.—The folding cycle you refer to is that made by the Dursley Pedersen Co., Dursley, Gloucestershire. It is very light and compact, but I cannot speak of its merits from personal experience. If you write to the makers they will, no doubt, send you full particulars. Primarily it is meant for military purposes.

"Cyclist."—Here are answers *seriatim* to your four queries:—(1) The eccentric chain adjustment for taking up slack is perfectly satisfactory, but has not, perhaps, so large a range as the ordinary screw and nut in the slots of the back stays. Of course, the rotation of the eccentric in the barrel bracket varies the reach of the pedal, and may require a little raising or lowering of the saddle. (2) The oval hole in the crank, and the oval end of the spindle, if a good fit, make an absolutely safe attachment; better than usual cotter pin. (3) Narrow chain is all right, if the teeth of the cogs are well tempered. A narrow roller necessarily implies more pressure on a given length than would be the case with a wider one. (4) The proof of the pudding, &c. No! I should say that the makers have thought it out carefully. It is not lightness, as such, that renders a machine unsafe, so much as the weakening of certain vital points, *e.g.*, fork crown, and the tube "liners." Personally, I shouldn't care to use a full roadster for all sorts of work, of less than 28lb., all on

Buffalo Bill.—So you have relinquished the mustang of the rolling prairie for the thing of steel and rubber, and have £12 to lay out! Your query is one which I shouldn't care to answer in a hurry with a revolver clapped to my head; but I think, on deliberation, that you cannot go wrong with any of the following makers' goods:—Humber, Swift, Raleigh, Premier, Rover, Rudge-Whitworth. For the money you should be able to get a change speed gear fitted—Fagan, or Sturmey Archer.

REFLECTIONS

(OF A PRIMITIVE HUMAN DISGUISED IN ETONS.)

Oh, to be Palæolithic!
  Oh, to hunt, and roam, and romp
In an age that's almost mythic,
  Earlier than the earliest "comp"!
When the race waxed strong in sounder
  Freedom from the "muff" and "swot,"
Little Prehistoric bounder,
  Happy was thy stony lot!

What was thy most hated task?—it
  Surely wasn't learning to
Turn a sort of laundry basket
  Into quite a neat canoe?
Was it building huts of hurdles—
  Shields from storm, and shades from sun—
Making wolfskin shirts and girdles?
  I should find them all pure fun!

In thine innocent, unbarber'd,
  Unsophisticated pate
Ne'er a thought of "maths" was harbour'd,
  And thy heart was free from hate
For the chap who found out syntax,
  As you scoured the woodlands o'er,
With a rough, but useful flint axe
  Seeking the pugnacious boar!

When, creating fresh diversions,
  Sometimes hostile neighbours made
Depredatory incursions
  Much too near your own stockade,
Then their frenzied hosts advancing
  Struck no terror to your soul;
Out you dashed to meet them, dancing
  Cake-walks on your chariot-pole!

For a stripling of my own age
  Life was utterly sublime!
Better in the good old stone age
  Than at any other time!
What's the lore of countless sages,
  What's the boon of high descent
To the "heir of all the ages"
  In a stifling class-room pent?

Do your worst, O Tyrant crammer!
  Yea, prescribe me, if you will,
Nauseous niceties of Grammar,
  Euclid, flagellations—still,
I, whose buoyant soul and skittish
  You would curb and civilise,
I'm a rank, blank, ancient British,
  Wild, child savage in disguise!

ARTHUR STANLEY.

A GIRL AT THE WHEEL.

A STORY OF A CHRISTMAS ADVENTURE ON THE MAHALUTCHMEE, FOUNDED ON FACT.

BY H HERVEY.

GEORGE SOPER

I.

THE small military station of Mundelore lay ten miles south of the Mahalutchmee, where our regiment had lately arrived from Burmah; and one day of Christmas week, we—a party of six—encamped near Igaisweram preparatory to an expedition across the river. Our ostensible object was tiger, but, having three ladies with us, we were combining pleasure with sport by making a picnic of it. The outgoing regiment, besides telling us of the likely jungle on the Mahalutchmee's north bank, had mentioned that old Joyce, the engineer at Igaisweram, would loan us his departmental steam tug and cabin boat for the asking, especially just now, when the river was still pretty full, although the monsoon had ceased—locally. We had asked; Joyce had agreed; so here we were: Major and Mrs. Strafford, her two sisters, Miss Emily and Miss Victoria Marlough, Cray and Thane, lieutenants; the latter—myself. Mrs. Strafford and her next sister Emily were of somewhat timid disposition; neither favoured the shooting part of the trip, and had made us promise that they should be subject to no risk. The youngest sister, Victoria, aged sixteen, and recently out from home, was built of different stuff. She was one of your high-spirited, athletic, good-all-round girls, ready for anything in the shape of adventure, and who do anything—from cricket to crochet. Strafford was a jovial, easy-going chap, and fond of *shikar*, or sport; Cray was another good fellow; while as for myself I preserve a discreet silence.

We were aware that about a mile below Igaisweram the Mahalutchmee traverses what the people fitly call *Dayum Thulloo-poo*, or Demon's Gate, from the fact that here the stream narrows from over a thousand yards to about one-fifth that breadth, and shoots a gorge, walled in for several furlongs by rocky cliff-like banks. The resultant suction of these rapids is felt so far up as Igaisweram; for the water races through the falling gulch, and churns into a veritable caldron below—even during the summer months. What it is in the rainy season I leave the reader to imagine.

We rode out from Mundelore, and found everything ready for us on arrival. Our tents were pitched on the bank a short distance above Igaisweram; the tug and

Google

cabin boat lay moored to the shore abreast of the encampment.

After breakfast we passed the time in maturing our plans for the morrow, and interviewing the people whom we had forewarned of our coming, and who—to our delight—now promised us a tigress, known to be lurking in the opposite jungle; she was not a man-eater, but had been making free with the cattle of several forest hamlets in the vicinity.

We had three tents; the centre one common to all, that to the right for the three sisters, that to the left for us men. The servants established themselves under a tree, it not being wild-animal country on this shore.

The sun set; the short twilight began to fade; and while we were seated in camp chairs semicircled on the bank, enjoying the river aspect, and discussing our prospects of sport, the servants began laying the dinner table in the tent behind us. Mrs. Strafford and Miss Marlough had already dressed for the evening; so had we; but Victoria, who had been gathering ferns, had just retired, ordering the servants to light a lantern and bring it to her tent. For some time we heard her humming to herself, till suddenly the tuneful murmur changed to a series of angry ejaculations, accompanied by a sound of blows, and then an appeal for help. Her sisters hurried into the tent; we, apprehending possible danger, fetched our rifles, followed, and shouted for permission to enter. A medley of shrieks responded, and they called wildly for us. Imagining all sorts of things we lifted the flap and dashed in. Mrs. Strafford and Miss Marlough were holding on to each other, helpless and whimpering, while Victoria, pirouetting round, was apparently belabouring herself with a slipper! For a second we stared about in stupid amazement, trying in vain to locate the enemy; but when our eyes became accustomed to the uncertain light we saw that the tent walls and floor swarmed with *jerrymundlums*, a huge poisonous species of tarantula or spider! Attracted or disturbed by the light, the ugly insects, who must have had their habitat somewhere near, had invaded the tent in thousands, and were now scampering about in all directions; many had already clawed up Victoria's draperies, and we others would soon have the brutes all over us!

"Run, Edith!" shouted Strafford to his wife, as we danced over the ground, crushing the spiders by scores, and knocking them off the ladies' dresses.

But as Mrs. Strafford was too panic-stricken to move, the Major seized her round the waist, threw her over his shoulder, and streaked through the door. I and Cray followed with the other two, and thus for the moment were rid of our pests. Luckily no one was stung, otherwise there would have been lamentation that night.

"Come," said Strafford; "after this we cannot remain where we are; we must get on to the boats for dinner—and sleep there."

All admitted the advisableness of the step; the servants were summoned, lights put out, and we bundled bag-and-baggage on board. No sooner was the embarkation completed than the crew drew up the landing planks, and the *Sarang* proceeded to paint a broad band of tar on each of the mooring hawsers.

"What's that for?" I asked, in the vernacular.

"Sir, this bank is infested with *jerrymundlums*; they are attracted by light, and tar is the only thing that drives them away; we use it every night at the bungalows. If your honours wait a little, you will see."

Lamps had already been set going on the two craft, and, curious to test the truth of the *Sarang's* assertion, we stood with a lantern at one of the hawsers and watched. We did not wait long; in a few minutes the water's edge became alive with the tarantulas, scurrying to and fro in search of a way to the lights. Presently, they discovered the ropes, for now we beheld them advancing along the hawser. They came on with apparent confidence till the leaders were suddenly confronted by the tar, whereupon they instantly turned, and fled up that rope much faster than they had come; the front ranks must have communicated the panic to the others, for very shortly afterwards every insect had disappeared! Where they went to, Heaven only knew, but anyhow we were not molested again. We ate our dinner, following it up with some singing to Mrs. Strafford's banjo accompaniment, and then turned in.

II.

The fateful morrow came. When we looked on the Mahalutchmee we observed the water to be flecked with occasional patches of foam, a sure sign that it had been

raining further up, and that the stream was rising. By the time that all had had their morning meal, the steam was up, so we unmoored and proceeded to cross the river, the tug towing the cabin boat. Directly we cast off, and even while hugging the bank in comparatively slack water, the "pull" down stream was very noticeable. The tug's paddles thrashed energetically, but with the cabin boat in tow she could make only slow progress. After creeping up shore for a considerable distance we edged off towards the north bank, and now, although the tug fought the current manfully, it was as much as she could do to hold her own. At times we thought that the swirl would get the upper hand, but at last, after a tough struggle, we reached slack water, and then, sidling under the bank, finally moored in safety.

"Thank goodness that's over!" exclaimed the Major. "Edith, I saw you turn pale when we were in mid stream."

"Enough to make us all turn pale," put in Victoria. "Supposing the current had conquered, where should we have been by now?"

"Yes; once the tug gave way, I question if she could have fetched the bank anywhere before getting hopelessly into the suck," I observed.

"Unless the fellows—to save themselves—had cast off the boat, with all of us on her," said Cray, laughing. "These bits of grapnels for anchors would be of no good for holding in such a rush as this."

"It is too awful to talk about!" cried Mrs. Strafford, hysterically. "Leo, insist on their going a good deal further up the river before we attempt to re-cross."

"All right, my dear. Now, *Sarang*," he continued, addressing the skipper in the vernacular, "where can we get a goat?"

"There is a village about half a mile up the river, sir."

"Well, one of you go and bring a goat. Our servants know nothing of the country, so I cannot send them. We will kill the animal on the bank and leave the carcase there, so that the tigress can scent it. Here is a rupee," flinging the man a coin.

The *Sarang* hesitated. "A pity your honour did not get the goat at Igaisweram, sir," said he diffidently.

"Why, what's to prevent our procuring one at the village you speak of?"

"Nothing, sir; only that we must go in a body; even then we shall be afraid."

"All right; go, the lot of you, leaving one man to look after the fires."

The *Sarang*, after consulting with the others, all of whom had congregated ashore abreast of the boat, turned to Strafford, and said, "Sir, we are afraid to go; we are unarmed, and are informed that the tigress kills people."

"Lies!" the Major exclaimed. "You heard them tell us plainly enough that she was not a man-eater; you were standing by at the time."

"Still, sir, we are afraid to go."

"Look here," interrupted Victoria—to whom I had been translating the conversation—"lend them a rifle; perhaps that will give them courage."

The weapon was offered, but one and all declared that they knew nothing of firearms.

"Oh, confound it all!" cried Cray, suddenly clapping on his helmet, seizing his rifle, loading it, and springing ashore, "I will go with them. Come on!" he growled, in the vernacular, as he climbed the bank; whereupon the party—barring one of the cabin boat lascars—willingly followed their leader.

Having told the lascar to look after the tug's fires, we awaited Cray's return with all the patience we could muster, sitting in the fore cabin of the boat, and passing the time in desultory chat. The servants—too alarmed to land—were on the tug, preparing breakfast, of which we were unwilling to partake till Cray rejoined us.

"How long he is!" presently remarked Victoria, breaking one of the many silences.

"He'll turn up soon," muttered the Major, who dozed in the corner seat. As a matter of fact we were all somewhat somnolent.

"Well, I'm going on the bank to see if I can spot him," said the young lady. "Wake up, Mr. Thane, and escort me."

I took my rifle and obeyed. We climbed the bank and looked up the path leading to the village, but saw no signs of our folks.

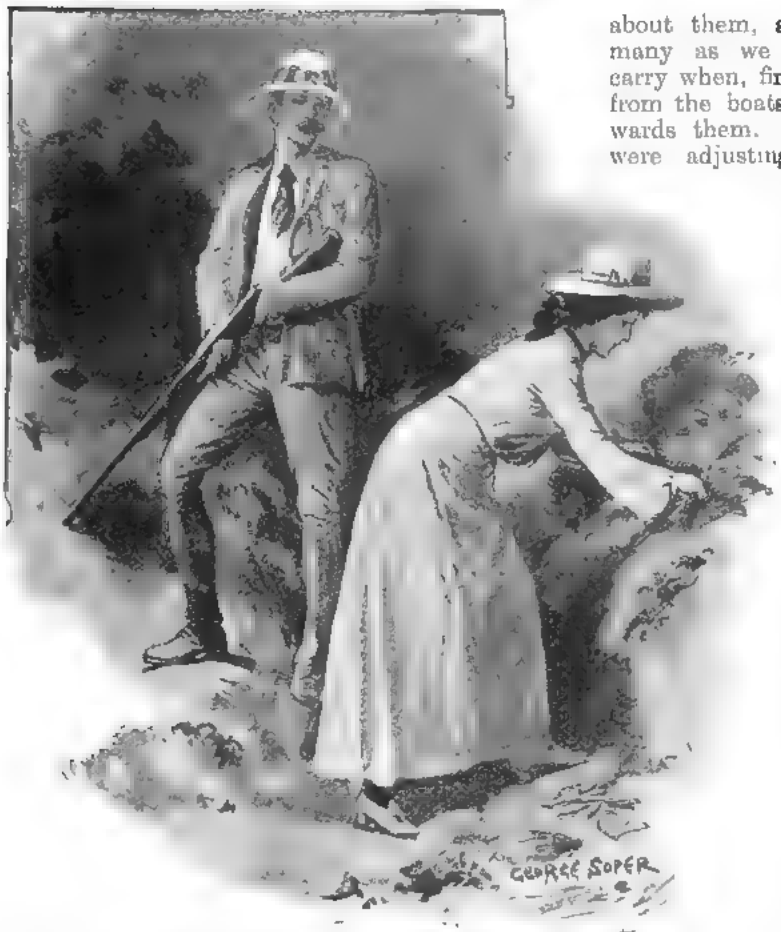
"I wonder if the tigress or any other beast is in there!" remarked my companion, regarding the jungle speculatively.

"I think not; not close by, at all events."

"Why?"

"Because when any big animal—tiger especially—is present, the birds make a row."

"Really! I did not know that."



I COULD NOT BUT ADMIRE THE GIRL IN THUS HUNTING FOR FERNS WHEN WE EXPECTED TO COME FACE TO FACE WITH A TIGRESS.

"Yes; it is an infallible sign, relied on by sportsmen."

"I see plenty of birds about, and as they seem quiet enough, I think I'll try and get some more ferns. You keep guard, Mr. Thane, while I grub about, just along the jungle fringe here."

Of course I acquiesced; I had sufficient confidence in the birds, for with seven years' experience I had learnt to depend on them, the *minas*, or starlings, above all—numbers of which were now chatting in the trees. Nevertheless, I held my loaded piece full cocked at the "ready," sticking close to my charge, with eyes and ears open. I could not but admire the girl's *sang froid* in thus hunting for ferns where we expected to come face to face with a tigress. For a good half-hour we wandered about; ferns grew in abundance; she seemed to know all about them, and we had gathered as many as we could both conveniently carry when, finding ourselves a good way from the boats, I suggested a move towards them. The girl agreed, and we were adjusting our loads of greenery when a distant shout, in Strafford's voice, fell on our ears.

"Mr. Cray has got back—by a short cut," muttered Victoria. "No! hark!" Again the shout! we heard it more distinctly this time, for we were listening, and it simultaneously struck us that the cry was one of entreaty! Dropping the ferns, we rushed to the bank, to see—what? the cabin boat yards out, and being fast carried down stream, the tug lying where we had left her, and the servants with the lascar swarming up the bank, making for us in an evident state of the wildest panic!

"Can you steer?" suddenly asked Victoria, clutching my arm.

"No!" I answered helplessly, for I was ignorant of any sort of seamanship: boating, yachting, had never appealed to me. But ere I could think more, the girl, calling on me to follow, set off running like a deer for the steamer. I kept up with her; she tore along resolutely and in silence, as if she had some fixed purpose in view, though, for the life of me, I could not, at that awful time, guess her intentions; the situation of our friends seemed so utterly hopeless! Charging through the terrified servants, plunging headlong down the bank, she and I sprang on to the tug's deck at the same moment. One wild look round told me the fearful truth. On tying up, the tow rope had been cast off from the steamer and became the fore mooring of the cabin boat. The river had been surely though imperceptibly rising, and the water, saturating the earth into which the stakes were driven, had weakened their hold; the pull on the

stakes, caused by the current's pressure on the boat herself, had uprooted the pegs. No one was on the alert; consequently, the boat had broken away, and was now being whirled down towards the Demon's Gate as fast as the river could take her! How the tug—which was similarly straining at her tethers—did not break loose, I could not understand, except that perhaps, being the larger vessel, the men had hammered the stakes further home.

But now what happened? Flying to the furnace, wrenching open the door, and ascertaining that the fires were going, Victoria bestowed a swift glance on the steam gauge, and then sprang aft to the wheel. "Jump ashore, Mr. Thane!" she screamed, handling the wheel. "Cast off the moorings, hop on again, and pull in the ropes, for we shall require them! For Heaven's sake look sharp!"

III.

I wear two medals and the D.S.O. I have served through two hard-fought campaigns, both under distinguished leaders; one, the hero of Kandahar and Pretoria; but never have I acknowledged the master mind of another so completely, so blindly, as I did that of this girl on that direful day. I intuitively yielded to her, owned her my superior; for whereas, with no mind of my own, I felt utterly at sea, she had all her wits about her, and rose to the occasion with a sublimity that absolutely enthralled me.

I obeyed her, and regained the already moving steamer with difficulty.

"Now start the engines!" she continued sharply. "That lever—there! Pull it half-way towards you!"

I turned, saw the lever, and did as she bid me. There was a rush of steam, the paddles revolved, and we shot forward at increased speed. By now we had been carried well into the stream, and the girl had the tug's head down the river. The cabin boat, some two hundred yards below us, was being whisked by the current all ways; sometimes end on, and sometimes broadside to it. I saw the Straffords and Miss Marlough, a pitiable group, on the little fore deck, the Major with an arm round his wife, and the two sisters clinging together, evidently in an acute state of apprehension. Then I glanced at this other sister, grasping the wheel with a determined, set look on her face, as she guided the tug to the rescue! The steam coughed and hissed, the paddles whipped the water, the little ship throbbed and trembled, but were we gaining? The current affected both craft equally; and, to me, the distance betwixt the two did not seem to lessen. As we progressed, the suction appeared to draw us along faster; and already the cliff-like banks of the Demon's Gate were in view!

"Pull the lever over a bit more!" cried the girl, now interrupting my painful reflections. "If the boiler goes, it can't be helped; there's no other chance, and at this rate we shall never catch them up! Throw some more logs in first!"

I threw in the logs, and then drew over the lever as directed, expecting—from what she had just said—to be blown to atoms by the bursting boiler. However, no such catastrophe occurred, but the effect of my operation was instantaneous; the paddles spun round at redoubled speed, the whole fabric we stood on reeled and palpitated, showers of sparks shot up through the little funnel, and I thought we should be shaken to pieces. For some time, though we must have had tremendous steam on, there was no perceptible diminution of the space dividing the two craft; but, at last, the blessed realisation came to our hearts that we were slowly yet certainly overhauling the chase! Yes, we were closing in without doubt! Strafford, too, grasped the fact, for he waved his hat, and we heard his "Hurrah!" through the thump-thump of our frenzied machinery. Now arose the sickening question whether we could come up with the cabin boat before she entered the *Dayum Thulloopoo*; and given we did, should we have time to make her fast to us, turn round, and successfully battle against the current ere it was too late, ere the racing water became too powerful for us? Another question; would the steamer, *with the boat in tow*, be able to fight the rush? Could she do so by herself, even if we managed to trans-ship our friends, and allowed the boat to go to her doom? We weighed these chances, conversing in short, desultory sentences, and I could see that Victoria was fully alive to the difficulties before us.

"I don't believe we can pull the boat," she said, in decided tones.

"Then what's to be done?"

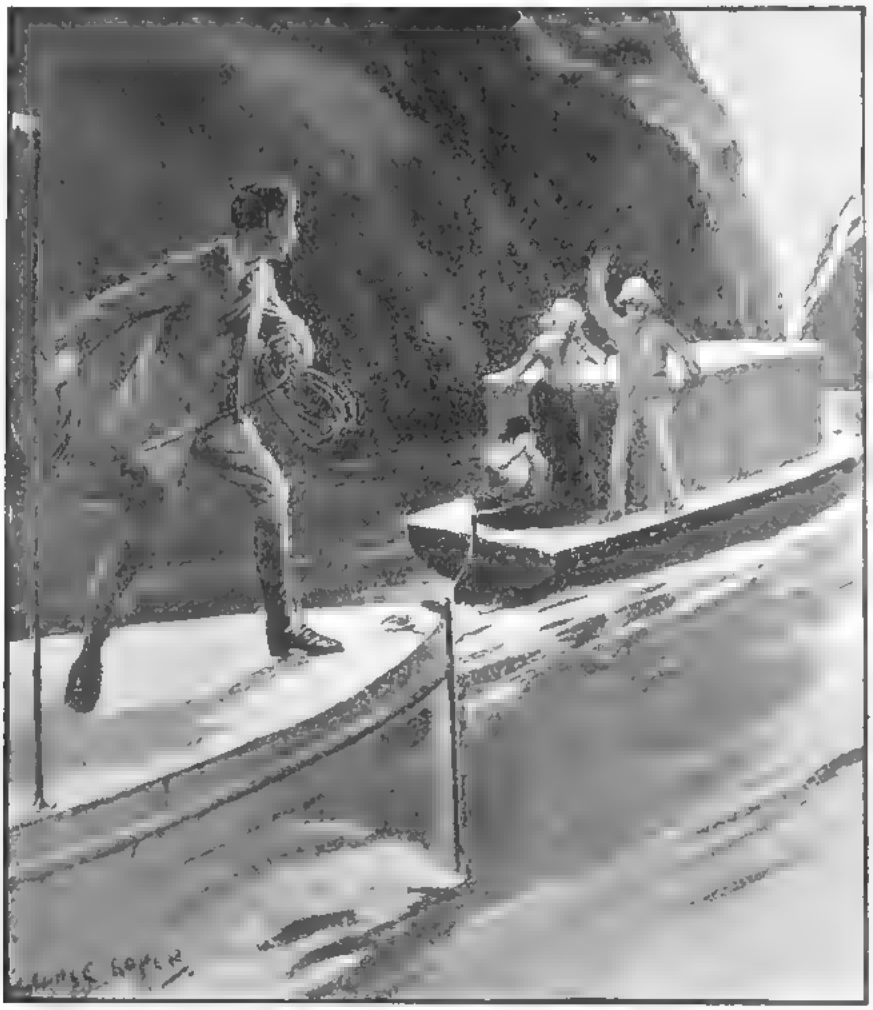
"Sheer alongside, get them to jump across, and let the boat go. It will be as much as the tug can do to make head alone."

"But will your sisters jump?"

"They'll have to. Leo will hear you now. Go forward; shout to him to be ready in the bow to catch the rope you fling him. Understand?"

"Y—yes."

"Tell him when he has made fast there to rush aft. You do the same here, and



"MAJOR! BE READY TO CATCH THIS ROPE!"

throw him this rope," pointing to the rear hawser. "I dare not leave the wheel. Off you go!"

I scrambled forward, coiled the rope in my hand, and shouted, "Major! Be ready to catch this rope when we get nearer! Make fast to that knob!"

He understood me, and we waited. Under Victoria's guidance the tug sidled closer and closer; the moment came; we almost touched; I launched the rope; Strafford caught it, and made fast.

"Now to the stern!" I yelled, and we simultaneously floundered to the opposite end of our respective craft.

"Here you are!" and I threw him the stern rope.

"Now tighten them, both of you!" screamed Victoria, rapidly revolving the wheel.

We did, and the boats were side by side. When I raised my eyes I saw that we were sweeping round; and in a few seconds we had our heads up river!

Now came the most agonising part of the whole adventure. The paddle boxes inter-

fered with the boats lying gunwale to gunwale; the tug, moreover, was higher out of the water, and the only way for the trio to come across was to ascend the roof of the cabin boat, and thence clamber up on to the steamer's paddle-box, which towered some four feet above the boat top. Mrs. Strafford and her sister did not possess the nerve to undertake the feat, though we implored them to try. Had we time and means of lashing planks from craft to craft, the ladies—even were they too timid to walk across them—might have been encouraged to come to the paddle-box; but, as it was, the cabin boat wobbled alarmingly; the water, thrashed by the paddles, foamed between the two vessels; while as for Strafford and myself carrying the ladies, that would have been impossible under the circumstances. Persuasion, entreaty, had no effect; the precious moments flew, and it was patent to all that so far from making any progress against the current we were being carried by it towards the Demon's Gate!

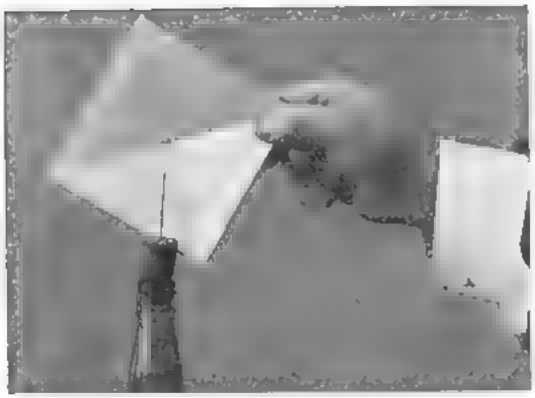
"Come and hold the wheel, Mr. Thane!" cried Victoria, suddenly. "Don't move it!" as I mechanically grasped the spokes. She ran forward to the engine; I saw her read the steam gauge, and then wring her hands in a gesture of despair. The next moment, however, she seemed to come to herself; for, poking up the fire into a roaring furnace, she seized the lever, drew it over to its full extent, and then rushed back to her post.

"There's no safety valve! We shall either blow up or conquer now!" I heard her say in a hollow voice, as she took the wheel.

But Heaven was with us. Though the tug simply writhed, though the machinery clanked and slithered, the boiler held. The fight was a stern one, and we watched it with bated breath till our agony of doubt was removed. Our downward progress slackened; it stopped; we were stationary; then, after remaining so for several excruciating moments, we began to creep slowly, very slowly, up stream, and in due course brought up in safety under the north bank, but far below our original landing place!

No more. The rest I leave to your imagination.

THE REVOLVING PAPER.



What is the force that causes the paper to revolve? Is it animal magnetism or only a common draught? Try for yourself. Take a piece of ordinary writing paper, and fold it into a square. Next draw two diagonal lines from its corners, and, where the lines intersect, balance the paper upon the point of a needle that may be fixed in a cork.

If you hold your hand as shown in illustration the paper will revolve.

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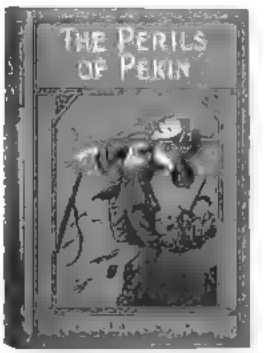
Traffics and Discoveries. By Rudyard Kipling (Macmillan, 6s.).—Mr. Kipling's new book contains stories in the familiar vein, but it cannot be praised so unreservedly as some of his earlier volumes. Let it be said at once, however, that these tales of the army and navy would be a great achievement for almost any other writer. It is, indeed, paying Mr. Kipling a high compliment to say that better work is expected from his pen. There is lacking some of the dash and much of the freshness that have hitherto been such delightful characteristics of his books.

Still, the greatest fault is that the stories are difficult to read. It is not that they are dull—far from it; but the pages in which they are narrated bristle with many technicalities that can only be appreciated to the full by experts. It is the first duty of a writer to be intelligible to the class to which he appeals. Philosophers and scientists appeal to their fellows, and therefore much in the way of complex terms may be pardoned them. Mr. Kipling, however, writes for the "general," and there is good reason why he should abstain from indulgence in the technical intricacies of, say, steam tactics. In this respect, Mr. Kipling's method threatens to become a mannerism that must detract appreciably from the pleasure of those who read his books.

For Heart o' Gold. By Constance Smedley (Harpers, 6s.).—Miss Smedley came to the front last year with "An April Princess." Now she appears before us again with a novel in which modern people masquerade in fairy-tale guise. A princess is betrothed to a prince, her cousin, whom she loveth not, and is wooed by another prince ("Heart o' Gold"), who assumes the rough garb of a swineherd, and meets her when she takes walks beyond her father's castle walls. The adventures of the princess and her swineherd lover form a very interesting and graceful story, which we can heartily recommend to our readers.

The Abbess of Vlaye. By Stanley Weyman (Longmans, 6s.).—Mr. Weyman's hand has not lost its cunning, and his latest production may be ranked with his best works. *The Abbess of Vlaye* is a tale of France in the reign of Henry the Fourth. It was a bad time for France, for the power of the nobles was great, and in the provinces controlled by them misgovernment was rife. Henry was king, but he did not do much more than reign; he could not be said to rule. He was over-lord, but not lord. Mr. Weyman details the monarch's first great attempt to subdue his vassals. M. de Vlaye is the villain of the story, and the Abbess is something more than his accomplice. The treachery compassed by the latter fails of its anticipated effect, and results in her early widowhood. A bad woman she, yet for her bravery, her daring, and her great love much must be pardoned her. A stirring book, full of alarums and excursions, pursuits, captures, and hair-breadth escapes.

The Perils of Pekin. By W. M. Graydon (Shaw, 3s. 6d.).—This is a story of the Boxers' rising in 1900, and the adventures of two American lads in Pekin during that troublous time. For the rest there is the discovery of a long-lost brother, and the rescue of a royal princess. The reader comes to the conclusion that the book has certainly not been written because Mr. Graydon had anything to say. It is as if the author had said to himself: "Now, let me write a book for boys. China makes a good background. It is true I don't know much about that country, but



probably those who peruse the volume will know less." So the story has been written, and, to give it local colour, there are the usual references to "native Christians," "impending massacre of Europeans," "foreign devils," "legation soldiers," and "the allies." There is not a single passage in this volume that could not have been culled from the newspapers, or, at best, a not very illuminating book of travels. Atmosphere, in the true sense of the word, there is none. Of course it is possible that Mr. Graydon is familiar with China and the Chinese; but, if this is the case, he has been at pains to conceal any intimate knowledge of which he is possessed. Though this is not the author's first book, *The Perils of Pekin* is amateurish, the writing indifferent, and the story far from interesting. It is an example of the books written specially for boys, about which we had something to say last month.

The Right o' the Line. By R. Power Berry (Nisbet, 3s. 6d.).—This is a book written in honour of the Royal Regiment of Artillery, which—though not the senior arm of the service—claims pride of place, and when all arms are on parade takes the right of the line. To give, in full detail, the whole stainless record of the R.A. would fill many books; the author has contented himself, therefore, with telling the story of some of the gunners' most glorious exploits since the birth of their Regiment. He starts with the siege of the Castle of St. Phillip, Port Mahon, in the island of Minorca, in 1781-1782, and he finishes with the stirring deeds of the artillery at Colenso, and the heroic stand of Q Battery—the battery that collectively won the V.C.—at Korn Spruit.

Between these two extremes he describes also the part played by the guns in those long three years during which Gibraltar—splendid imagination-stirring Rock!—thundered back her "Doom's Blast of a 'No'" to the allied forces of France and Spain,—in the Peninsular War, in the Crimean campaign and the defence of Kars, in the Indian Mutiny, and across the mountain frontier in the Afghan Wars. Verily, never were mottoes more thoroughly lived up to than those of the Royal Artillery. "Ubique"—"Quo Fas et Gloria ducunt": there you have epitomised the whole untarnished record of the regiment.

As a compiler, Mr. Power Berry has done his work well, putting before us a book that fires the blood, and sets us tingling as we read. But as a writer he does not impress us greatly. His style is weakened by a patent effort to be forceful. If the "bull" be allowed, his best passages are not his own. Thus, it is a quotation from one of Mr. Bennet Burleigh's despatches which gives the finest touch to the story of the gunners at Colenso:

> "But two men were left, and they continued the unequal battle. They exhausted the ordinary ammunition, and finally drew upon and fired the emergency rounds of case—their last shot. Then they stood to attention beside the gun, and an instant later fell, pierced through and through by Boer bullets."

They stood to attention beside the gun! An eloquent sentence, that.

It would be churlish, however, to find much fault with the author's style. It is sufficiently good, even if it might have more spirit. Speaking of the book as a whole, Mr. Berry has done his work well.

With Richard the Fearless. By Paul Creswick (Nister, 3s. 6d.).—Here we read of the adventures of Richard Cœur-de-Lion during the famous Red Crusade, in which Saladin was conquered. Richard is King, and Saladin is Emperor, and the hero is very, very good, and the heroine very sweet and pretty, and the villain very, very bad; but there is a minstrel. . . . *A* minstrel! *The* minstrel! A minor character in a tale where all are wooden, yet one standing out a live creature, and this, not by virtue of the author's pen-portrait, but inspired by the reader's imagination. For the singer is none other than Blondel, one of those romantic figures that brighten the pages of even the dullest history book. Blondel de Neale, the author gives as his name—may he be forgiven the addition of the surname—Blondel, the Minstrel of Picardy. It is written in the golden book of fame. Some iconoclast will one day prove, perhaps, that there never was a Blondel, and that some amiable historian invented the character. We'll none of that. Blondel to us

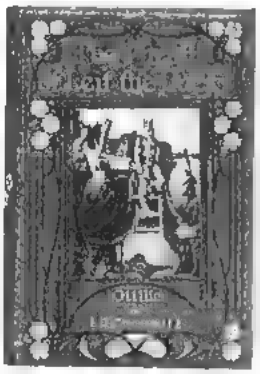
is real. We see him searching Europe for his King, singing his famous song under the walls of prisons far and near; we accompany him in his weary wanderings, we rejoice with him when his quest is successful. He is Mr. Creswick's saviour, redeeming by the magic of his presence a tale that otherwise, though carefully, nay, laboriously written, has little to recommend it.

True Grit. By Harold Bindloss (Partridge, 2s. 6d.).—Colonel Benson, an officer on Special Service on the Indian Frontier, is slain by Afghans, and, dying, asks his friend, Captain Ogilvie, to look after his boy, Hilford, who is at school in England. The lad's uncle, a hard, unsympathetic man, finds him a berth in a grain merchant's office in Liverpool. Office work at Bonner's is extremely distasteful to young Benson, especially as his senior clerk, Ollit, behaves towards him like a cad, but he makes one firm friend, young Ormond, a clerk in the same office. Ollit contrives Benson's dismissal, and young Ormond throws up his berth in sympathy. Together they obtain situations in Nigeria, and their adventures among the African savages are particularly worth reading, for Benson is left in charge of the factory when exposed to attacks by rebellious cannibals. Finally, however, Captain Ogilvie appears on the scene, and his influence, added to the boys' merits, procures good posts for Benson and Ormond, with a consulship in prospect.

True Grit is a good book. The office life and the life of two young clerks "digging together" is the real thing, and the description of the lonely, saffron-tinted African rivers, the silent, haunting forests, the mangrove swamps, and factory life on the West Coast, are vivid and convincing. And, in conclusion, Mr. Bindloss, in Benson and Ormond, has given us two manly youths without a suspicion of priggishness.

Dominoes: Games, Tricks, and Stories. By W. Whyte (E. Marlborough and Co., 1s.).—We had no idea it was possible to extract so much pleasure out of this so-called simple game until we perused Mr. Whyte's little book. The author has reduced dominoes to a science, and goes far towards placing the game on a closer level with more serious pastimes.

The Thrall of Leif the Lucky. By Ottilie A. Liljencrantz (Ward, Lock).—We confess to taking up this book with something of that prejudice which ill becomes the critic. The somewhat cumbersome title, the uncouth names of the characters, the scenes depicted in the illustrations, seemed to promise a dreary, or at least tedious, narrative. We lay the book down with sincere apologies to the author (or, as we take it, authoress) for so mischievously prejudging a tale of rare fascination.



This is a romance of the days of the Vikings, when the Anglo-Saxon race was young, and strong elemental passions surged in men's breasts, as the blue waves surged past the dancing prows of their far-sailing ships. Founded upon a most conscientious study of early Norse records, the "local colour" is worked up in quite remarkable fashion. They live before us, these girt young men with the flowing golden locks, their massive thews and sinews, their high hearts and dauntless courage. They live, and, having Anglo-Saxon blood within his own veins, the reader lives with them. And a splendid company they are! It was a primitive age—brutal in some respects, if you will, but heroic, even in vice. Might was right: what of that? For every heroic vice there was an heroic virtue. In those days there were—not giants, but MEN.

The story shifts from Norway to Greenland, thence to the new-found world, Markland, and back to Norway. The central theme is the tale of Alwin, son of the Northumbrian earl, who is carried off as prisoner in a Viking raid, and sold as a thrall, or slave. How he wins the love of Helga, the "shield-maiden," a type of primitive maidenhood to set the pulses throbbing, and attains to honour and freedom, forms the thread of the narrative.

The Thrall of Leif the Lucky breaks new, or almost new, ground, and is a book to make the veriest poltroon wish to be a man. Skoal to the Viking! Skoal!

Shakespeare's Heroines (Ernest Nister, 7s. 6d.).—This is a handsomely pro-

duced reprint of Anna Jameson's essays, being embellished with six coloured plates and seventy-four half-tone illustrations.

The Romance of Modern Locomotion. By Archibald Williams. Illustrated. (C. Arthur Pearson, Ltd., Henrietta-street, London, W.C., 5s.).—Every page of this brightly written book shows that the author is strongly imbued with the romance of the railway train and the steamboat. Knowing the vastness of his subject, Mr. Williams has been wise in not attempting to condense into a single volume the story of the romantic and wondrous development of transportation during the last hundred years. No consecutive order is attempted, and each chapter is complete in itself. Short historical sketches are given of the Midland and Great Western Railways. Other chapters are devoted to Canadian, Indian, and United States railways. The remaining articles collected in this volume describe the various forms of traction, signals, and other mechanical appliances connected with the working of a railway. The book is illustrated by twenty-five full-page photographic reproductions, and these add considerably to the interest of Mr. Williams' chatty descriptions of the rise and development of railway travelling in all parts of the world.

The Commission of H.M.S. "Implacable." By G. R. Parker, A.B. (The Westminster Press, 4s. net.).—Being the latest addition to the "Log" series, the object of which is to provide in a lasting form complete accounts of the commissions of ships in his Majesty's navy. H.M.S. *Implacable* was on the Mediterranean Station from 1901–1904, and this "Log" presents a very readable record of most of the important happenings on board during the cruise.

Wonder Book. (Ward, Lock, and Co., 3s. 6d.).—A Christmas presentation volume for the nursery, crammed with pictures, stories, and poetry that cannot fail to interest the little ones.

We have also received copies of the following works, a selection of which will be reviewed next month :—

From George Newnes, Ltd.—**The Phœnix and the Carpet,** by E. Nesbit (6s.); **Dialstone Lane,** by W. W. Jacobs (6s.)

From A. and C. Black.—**Uncle Tom's Cabin,** by Harriet Beecher Stowe (6s.); **By a Schoolboy's Hand,** by Andrew Home (3s. 6d.); **William Tell Told Again,** by P. G. Wodehouse (6s.); **A Tale of the Time of the Cave Men,** by Stanley Waterloo (3s. 6d.); **Stories,** by Ascott R. Hope (3s. 6d.); **The Rat** (Animal Biographies), by G. M. A. Hewett, and **The Dog,** by G. E. Mitton (6s. each); **Who's Who, 1905** (7s. 6d. net); **The Englishwoman's Year Book, 1905** (2s. 6d. net); **Who's Who Year Book, 1905** (1s. net).

From W. and R. Chambers.—**Glyn Severn's Schooldays,** by George Manville Fenn (5s.); **That Awful Little Brother,** by May Baldwin (3s. 6d.); **Brought to Heel,** by Kent Carr (5s.); **'Viva Christina,** by Edith E. Cowper (3s. 6d.).

From Methuen and Co.—**The Red Derelict,** by Bertram Mitford (6s.); **The Closed Book,** by William Le Queux (6s.).

From William Heinemann.—**Godfrey Marten: Undergraduate,** by Charles Turley (5s.).

From Ernest Nister.—**Bright Eyes' Picture Book** (5s.); **1905 Holiday Annual** (3s. 6d.); **Farmyard Tales** (3s. 6d.); **Only for Very Good Children** (2s. 6d.); and other pictorial and scriptural gift books for the nursery.

AT HICKSON'S.

By F. L. MORGAN.

Illustrated by ALFRED PEARSE.

No. 4.—A BRITISHER'S PREJUDICE.

TOWARDS the end of the Christmas term Hickson's lighter moments were devoted, amongst other things, to preparation for the gymnastic displays. Of these there were three—first, second, and junior divisions; and each display included a competition, which was an "open event." Now it so happened that this particular year—Ronald Stanborough's first winter at Hickson's—brought forth no entries from Bowen's for the first division. Everyone had expected Mary Baker to enter for it; but she, fearing that the cream of Carr's gymnasts would prove too much for her, and probably forgetting "how far high failure o'ertops the bounds of low success," put her name down for the second.

"Good thing," commented Stanborough, as he and half a dozen others stood steaming in the Lecture Hall, whither they had come after a lengthy run, to inspect the lists ere they changed.

During Ronald Stanborough's term and a half at the College he had made himself quite at home, learnt much from his fellow Hicksonians, and imparted somewhat. There was one thing, however, that was still a stumbling-block to his peace of mind, and that, gentle reader, was the mighty House of Bowen! There was something in Bowen's free and easy attitude, and in Carr's tacit acknowledgment of that attitude, that had first astonished and then irritated him. Like many young Englishmen, he regarded girls as pleasant and useful in their proper place; but, to his mind, the "proper place" was distinctly limited, and he could not see that there was any necessity or use for the fair sex at Hickson's. Bowen's dimly perceived his feelings, and though not understanding, resented them with much contempt. Consequently, the relations between Hickson's girls and our Englishman were decidedly strained.

This afternoon the fourteen mile run on the broad white roads, with six of Carr's fleetest of foot, had not proved so enjoyable to Stanborough as usual. In the first place, he had found, on putting them on, that his running togs were damp—and the discovery had not added to his peace of mind—or body. Then, about four miles out, a piece of flint working into his shoe had caused him considerable trouble. Therefore it was with feelings the reverse of pleasant, and in a tone that savoured of positive hostility, that he made with considerable emphasis the above remark.

"What is?" asked Stan Lawson, a tall, loose-limbed fellow of straight repute. Stanborough drew his finger down the list of names entered for the "first" display.

"All Carr's," he replied. Lawson raised his eyebrows.

"Don't see how it affects you a dollar's worth," he said; "you aren't entered."

Ronald opened his mouth to speak, but Jim Chaldwick interrupted hastily.

"Soothe down, Britisher. We all know your mediæval ideas of girls, so don't enlarge. Say, though," he added, turning to the others, "don't you fellows think that Mary Baker is good enough for the first?"

"She is, you bet!" was the general opinion. Ronald stood silent, feeling suddenly more out of tune than ever. The fact that his deeply-rooted ideas with regard to girls were invariably passed over in silence (or cut short with laughter) by Carr's, annoyed him exceedingly; especially just now when his knickers were flapping coldly, and the grazed skin on his foot, caused by the aforementioned piece of flint, was making itself felt uncomfortably.

"Mary Baker!" he said, suddenly, and with much sarcasm; "it's a pity she can't join the footer! What sort of a woman will she make, I'd like to know? She'll grow into a thing only fit to run races and turn somersaults!"

The six fellows with one accord turned on

"YES, AND I HEARD WHAT THE BRITISHER SAID!"

him sharply, each with a cutting retort on the tip of his western tongue; but after glancing at each other's angry faces, and at the irate Englishman's face—more angry than any—their expressions changed to one of amusement. Then they all turned at the sound of a foot-fall.

"Yes," said the tall girl who had just entered; "the door was open, and I heard what the Britisher said!" She looked calmly at Stanborough as she passed the group, and disappeared into the library through a door at the other end of the hall.

It was Mary Baker.

II.

Suddenly the thermometer sank to a degree of frost almost unknown in 'Frisco. The intensity of a North American winter was at its height; and this year it defied even the calm shelter of the Pacific coast, and for a short spell held San Francisco in a relentless grip, covering the ground with sparkles, and the river with a thick coating of ice. Natural ice was as entrancing as it was unusual, and Hickson's, grasping the opportunity, repaired in multitudes to the river, skates in hand. Ronald Stanborough's experience of skating had been confined to an English lake, and the wide stretch of frozen water which formed the west boundary to the senior field, was both new and delightful to him. He viewed with admiration the rapid and graceful evolutions of Mary Baker and Stan Lawson (Hickson's acknowledged leaders on the ice), and mentally resolved to make himself as expert in the art as they.

Meanwhile the Junior Gymnastic Display was past and over. Thomas P. Harris had won the competition, but Jane Hobbs had run him very close. Jane had astonished her parents by rapidly turning half-a-dozen somersaults in succession on hearing of her position.

"Keziah," exclaimed Selectman Cornelius Hobbs, "that gael of ours will turn up trumps yet! I'll lay my bottom dollar she kain't be beat at runnin' or somersaults!"

"That's so, Cornelius," Mrs. Hobbs had replied, with an unexplained sigh, as her motherly eyes followed the slim figure of her red-headed little daughter.

On the afternoon appointed for the display of the second division, Stanborough decided to skate as far as Penrose Town, a small village some five or six miles down the river. The Englishman was in no mood to witness the triumphs of Mary Baker in the gymnasium. He felt out of harmony, and dissatisfied with himself. He had been guilty of a remark that was—to say the least of it—ungenerous; besides having been uttered behind the girl's back. Mary Baker had, apparently, taken no notice of his outbreak, for when they happened to meet (which was not more often than the Englishman could help) she treated him about as usual. Nevertheless, Stanborough could not forget the incident—and it rankled. He knew he had been in the wrong, but still . The whole affair was beastly unpleasant and made him feel thoroughly uncomfortable. Such were his reflections as he swung out of Carr's on that dull afternoon and came face to face with Johnson of the Junior School.

"Aren't you coming to see the display?" asked the small boy, noting with disapproval the Englishman's dangling skates.

"No, Johnson," replied Ronald, "I am not. I am going to skate down the river to Penrose Town and back. Do you object?"

Johnson muttered an indistinct reply and hurried away; for, when roused, Stanborough invariably used forcible and British methods of dealing with Carr's juniors. Therefore Johnson wasted no time, but left the Britisher and strolled into Bowen's Court, where he had promised to meet his sister. He waited patiently for nearly a quarter of an hour.

"Say," he said to Mary Baker, who came hurrying into the Court, "Ronald Stanborough isn't coming to your show. He's gone skating—to Penrose Town."

"Oh," answered Mary Baker, without enthusiasm.

"An', Mary," went on the junior, walking beside her, "you'll hev to look mighty spry it's just on time for the display!"

"I know," and the girl quickened her steps; "I must change like lightning. But mind your talk, kiddie," she added, looking down at him, "or you'll be reported."

"Right O!" answered Johnson with much diffidence; for it would have been the simplest thing in the world for Mary to have reported him.

"Would you mind telling my sister that I've been waiting for her for hours?" next asked the junior.

"All right—if I see her," and Mary Baker, beloved of Bowen's and Carr's, the smartest girl gymnast and the fleetest of all Hickson's on the ice, disappeared through Bowen's doorway.

Pulling the ribbon off her long plait, she shook out her hair and grasped the hairbrush- Johnson, and all pertaining to him, forgotten. She was thinking of the coming competition (almost due to commence) and anticipating the honours that awaited her. Suddenly, however, the small boy's words came back to her mind and she opened her door.

"Seen little Johnson girl?" she asked of a passing Isabel Uridge.

"No—yes, though; she was somewhere round, a minute ago," was the reply.

"Well, tell her that her brother is waiting outside for her," and Mary closed the door again. They stuck close together, those two little Johnsons, she reflected. What else had the boy said? Oh, about Ronald Stanborough, of course.

Mary's life was a busy one, and she was possessed of a mind proportionate in health and training with her physical strength. She had almost forgotten the incident in the Lecture Hall, although its impression still remained with her.

So the Englishman was not coming to see her triumph in the gym. He had gone skating—to Penrose Town. Penrose Town . . . . *Penrose Town!* With a start Mary wheeled round and stared at the little clock on her shelf. Only that morning she had overheard the Head telling Mr. Carr that the ice had become most unsafe about a mile from Penrose Town, and that a notice to that effect must be put up in the Lecture Hall. That Ronald was an unpractised skater she knew. And he had started over

three-quarters of an hour ago. . . . there was no time to lose. . . .

Ten minutes later, Johnson, still waiting for his apparently reluctant sister, was electrified to see Mary Baker, equipped for walking and with her skates in her hand, come out of Bowen's.

"Jigger!" he exclaimed; "what on *earth*——" But Mary interrupted him. She was evidently in dead earnest.

"The ice is giving out," she explained, "and the Britisher doesn't know it. He can't skate any good, either; so I'm going to try to overtake him before anything happens."

"But—my land!—can't you send someone else? The display!"

"Nobody else could catch him up, he's had such a start," said Mary, beginning to walk out of Bowen's Court—"except Stan. Lawson," she added, "and he's already at the gym., I expect. Anyway, there's no time to lose. Tell them at the gym., will you?"

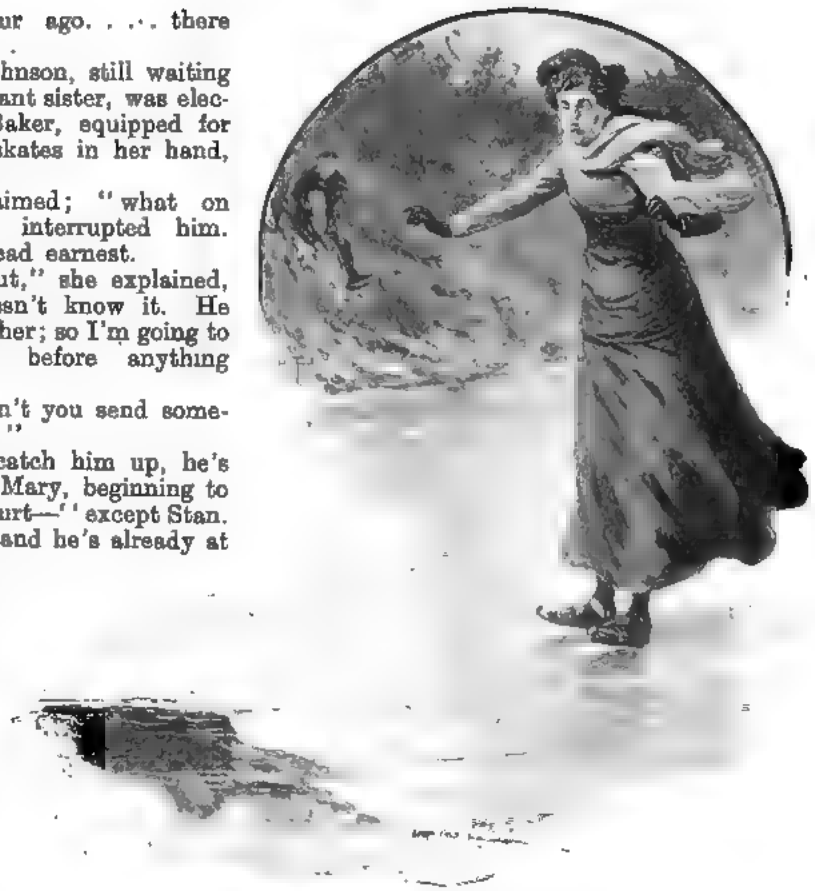
Johnson was a clear-headed youth.

"All right," he replied; "good luck!"

A little later, he explained Mary's absence to the horrified Hicksonians thus:—

"She's not coming," he said; "she's gone skating. So has Stanborough." Consequently, Hickson's received the impression that, for some unexplained reason, Mary and Stanborough had gone skating together, when Mary's presence at the gym. was most desired for the honour of her house. And Hickson's marvelled.

Meanwhile, with her eyes smarting from the keenness of the wind, and her heart beating with anxiety, Mary started on her lonely sacrifice. The afternoon was grey and still, and the frozen river, shaded on either bank by brown bushes and distorted trees, looked relentless and unending. As the moments went by, the girl's fears deepened; and, after covering four miles in twenty minutes, and with another mile stretched unwinding before her, she realised with a shock that Stanborough could not have skated at such a speed as to be beyond her sight. Great cracks rent the ice, and a few yards ahead was a gaping hole—large enough for a man to fall through. Terrified and panting, Mary pulled up. Then it was that the oppressive silence was broken, and a familiar voice on her right called:—



A FEW YARDS AHEAD WAS A GAPING HOLE.

"Look out! The ice is unsafe just there." She turned, and beheld Stanborough sitting high and dry on the bank—and quite aware of the danger. For one instant, relief was uppermost; then, the thought of her useless sacrifice, her unnecessary anxiety, her thrown-away honours, came rushing back to her mind. Instead of a fellow mortal in peril, Stanborough became a personality; an Englishman who held her strength in contempt, who had spoken slightingly and insultingly of her before several of Carr's seniors. In that brief moment, as she stood looking at him, Mary Baker endured the agony of mortification and wounded pride to the uttermost.

Ronald, of course, knew nothing of this.

He was astonished to see her—and he noticed the set expression of her face, and the relief that had leapt to her eyes at the sight of him. Was she frightened of something, he wondered, and relieved to see him sitting there? She turned and started to skate rapidly Hickson-wards. Ronald, obeying a sudden impulse, rose to his feet and called after her. She did not heed him, and after a few minutes' hard skating was beyond his sight in the darkening mist.

Stanborough reached Hickson's just as dusk was shrouding the river. In Carr's corridor he came upon Johnson. That youth, remembering the Englishman's "shirtiness" in the early part of the afternoon, edged away, saying:—

"So you're not drowned. Why couldn't you have gone an' done it some other day? Neeve won the comp., and he's miles behind Mary Baker. She'd have won it for a dead cert., only she was scared about you because the ice is on the thaw and there was no one else could have skated swift enough."

By this time he had edged himself round the corner, and Stanborough was left to digest the astounding piece of news just imparted to him, and to realise that, had he been in mortal peril, nothing but the splendid strength and athletic training which had called forth his contempt and abuse, could have saved his life. He walked slowly into his study, gradually understanding a tithe of the bitterness that had been Mary Baker's that afternoon.

III.

If the seniors of Carr's and Bowen's desired to hold conference after six p.m., the Lecture Hall (and the library that adjoined it) was the meeting-place. Here societies flourished, harassed secretaries confabulated, and friends chatted or discussed business; here, in fact, was to be found the average senior during the winter evenings. The subject of general conversation on this particular evening was—Mary Baker. Why had she thrown up the display to skate with Stanborough? The riddle was unsolved, and Hickson's was mystified. One thing however, had been decided upon—she must explain. Such was the point reached when Ronald Stanborough entered the Lecture Hall that evening. Things had come to a head, and he must *do* something. For two hours he had thought of nothing but Mary Baker, and the result was that he came to the only place where he could meet her that night. She was not there. Hickson's, however, noted his advent with satisfaction. Here was half of the skating party. He would know something, if not all. Ronald, with an expression sphinx-like in its stolidity, strolled up to the largest group and waited.

"Ernest Neeve won the comp.," commenced Stan Lawson.

"Ah," said Stanborough, "did he really? Congratulations, Neeve."

At that moment Mary Baker opened the door, and, after glancing round, walked slowly into the hall. She evidently expected Hickson's questions, for her face looked pale and uncompromising. She spoke at once.

"I have been nearly to Penrose Town this afternoon," she said, slowly, as though half asking that they might be satisfied with that.

"Why?" asked Ernest Neeve, abruptly.

Nobody spoke, and the general curiosity declared itself in the expectant silence. Then it was that inspiration came to Ronald Stanborough—and he laughed.

"Think yourself lucky, my lad," he said, turning to Neeve, after a glance at the painful confusion waking in Mary Baker's eyes, "that at the last minute Mary Baker realised her worth! She is too good for the second division, so she's going to enter for the first, next week!"

"Oh!" answered Neeve, with a shrug of his shoulders

"Good for you, Mary," remarked Stan Lawson, turning to speak to Chaldwick.

"A leg-up for Bowen's!" declared Hickson's in general.

The tension was relieved; Hickson's was satisfied with the Britisher's explanation; in an instant the hall was filled with the hum of voices, and other topics of conversation came to the fore.

Ronald went over to Mary Baker.

"I spoke like a cad that day," he said; "I know all about this afternoon, and——"

"It's all right," interrupted the girl, generously; "you've made up for it anyway just now. Let's drop it."

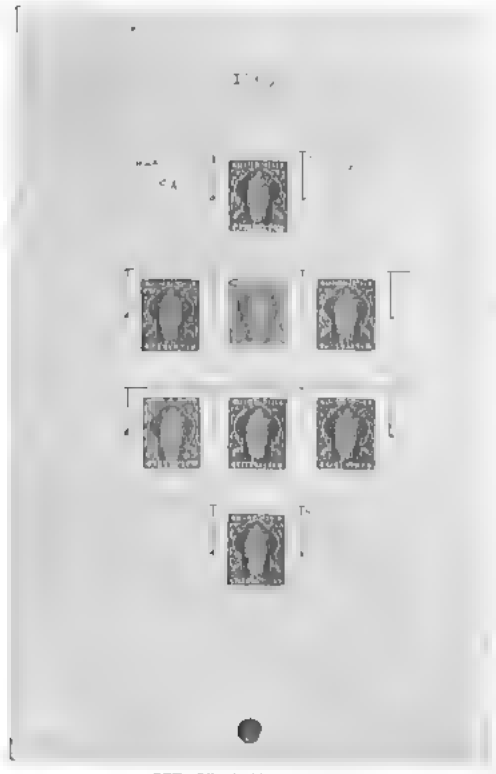
"Thanks," said the Englishman, as he walked away.

Thus Ronald Stanborough made his peace with Bowen's, and, in that mental handshake with Mary Baker, sealed the compact of a friendship that brightened two lives—at Hickson's and afterwards.

HOW TO ARRANGE A COLLECTION.

THE average collector who mounts his stamps in a printed album, in which each stamp is allotted its own particular space, is more or less compulsorily neat in the arrangement of his collection. He cannot go far wrong.

But as stamps increase, and the discouraging blanks that must be left in a general album correspondingly increase, collectors are compelled to break away from the general printed album into some free method that will admit of their attention and expenditure being concentrated on one or more countries or groups of countries. Hence, we have the movable leaf album, and the Cistafile, in which the collector mounts his stamps on detachable leaves or cards, on a plan of his own, guided mostly by some good standard catalogue.



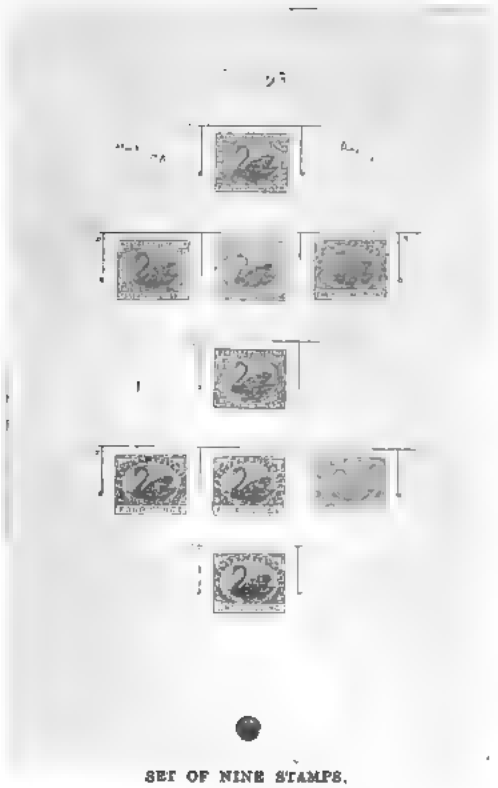
SET OF EIGHT STAMPS.

The printed album, despite its unfillable blanks, is nevertheless the best of all training for the beginner. It shows him at a glance, and in the most practical way, the sequence of issues, their relation to each other, and how to arrange them on a settled plan.

Ordinarily speaking, most collectors, both young and old, will do well to start as general collectors, with a good printed album as their philatelic guide, philosopher, and friend. In the study of its arrangement and in the mounting of stamps in its pages they will pick up the A.B.C. of philately so necessary to the beginner. They will learn to understand and appreciate the postal issues of all countries, and so acquire a broad view of many questions affecting the hobby as a whole, whereas a premature plunge into specialism might leave them undesirably one-sided and narrow. We shall never all see, eye to eye, as to what countries are best to collect, and it is well that this should be so. But if we all start as general collectors we shall get to know enough of most countries to enable us to examine and appreciate others' favourites with that pleasure-yielding sympathy so acceptable to the hearts of all collectors.

But the day must come for most of us who develop a real earnest devotion to the hobby, when we must draw the line somewhere short of the all-the-world plan of the printed album. And it is with those who have arrived at the parting of the ways, who have chosen a few countries out of the many, and who are now shaping their own independent philatelic course, that I want to discuss this all-important question of how to arrange a collection to the greatest advantage.

Few things look more unsatisfactory than



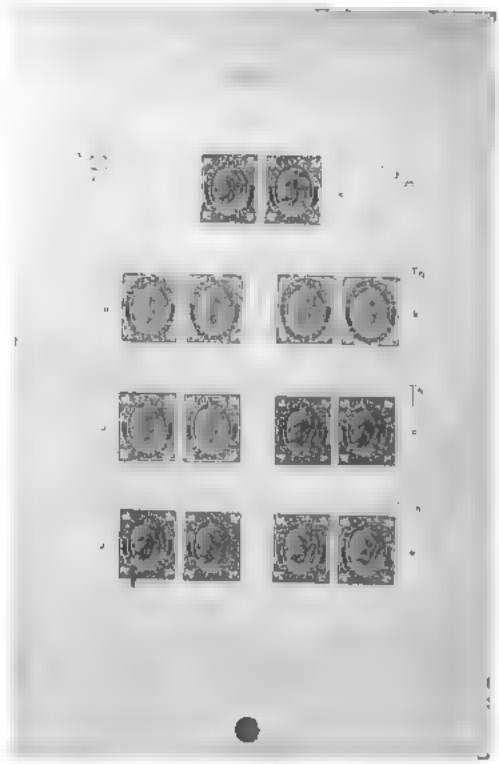
SET OF NINE STAMPS.

pictures in unsuitable frames. So it is with postage stamps. The best collection in the world may be rendered unpleasing and ineffective by careless or inartistic arrangement. In fact, it is not too much to say that the pleasure to be derived from the inspection or display of a collection of postage stamps very largely depends upon the manner in which it is arranged. Some collections are jumbled together in almost hopeless confusion. Their owners generally excuse themselves with the plea that they have not had time to arrange their stamps properly. The friend who inspects the collection will probably go away with a feeling of regret that the stamps do not belong to some one who would afford the time to arrange them properly and effectively.

I have seen some very fine accumulations of stamps arranged in old ledgers and index books, each page plastered all over with stamps in all stages of preservation and decay—some on ragged pieces of paper, some on entire envelopes; pairs, strips, and blocks, grand specimens of scarce varieties, and remnants of the commonest stamps, all huddled together in sweet confusion. I have seen a very large number of the great collections of the world, and I think I should be well within the mark if I put the number of those that would pass muster as being effectively and artistically arranged at not more than ten per cent. of the whole.

Yet there is no excuse for an untidily arranged collection. All the best printed albums classify and separate the issues, and in planning out our blank album pages we must follow the same course.

Blank albums, as they are termed, are of all sorts of sizes, from large to small quartos, but the smaller and therefore more portable sizes are now mostly in favour. The general size is about nine inches by ten inches. Personally, I prefer an even smaller size, my favourite being the No. 3 Cistafile, on which I am now mounting all my stamps. This measures nine inches in height by six inches in width. Some collectors prefer to arrange series after series in lines on the same page. In this way they make the most of each page and, possibly, more clearly show the sequence and relation of the various issues. Others of us prefer to treat each separate issue as a separate and complete picture to be set in its own frame on its own separate page. For such treatment the only



DISPLAY OF PAIRS.

suitable page is the small size. Some collectors mount their stamps plainly on a severely plain page. They ban all idea of ornamentation, and some will not even admit a note or a date. For them each page must be spotless and undefiled. No border of even the simplest line is permitted, and the hinge is tolerated reluctantly as a necessary evil. All copies must be absolutely mint and perfectly centred, and if you want to examine a watermark the specimen must be blown over on its hinge gently with the softest zephyr of a breath, for such spotless stamps on such spotless pages

DISPLAY OF BLOCKS OF FOUR.

must not be touched by mortal hands. Few of us can hope to live up to such a state of ideal perfection, and we are therefore content to be placed a little lower than those philatelic angels. Yet all of us who have fine copies to be proud of do well to be jealous of any undue handling. Hands that are rarely washed should as rarely be allowed to touch an unused and valued stamp. Neatness and cleanliness are inseparable from satisfactory stamp collecting.

The Earl of Crawford annotates every page of his albums. His neat, small writing tells the history of every series and of every variety of that series, so that each page forms in reality a chapter in the history of the postal issues of a country. He is in the truest sense a scientific collector. We may not hope to rival such painstaking and high watermark collecting, but we may follow in its wake, and the closer the better.

Most blank albums have a plain border line, and the enclosed space is generally patterned with a very faintly printed arrangement of crossed lines, forming minute squares, a form of ruling termed *quadrillé*. These lines enable the collector to space his stamps regularly.

Where there is a border, or marginal line, it is generally regarded as sufficient ornamentation by most fastidious collectors, but when the page or card is quite plain, then I would suggest a little ornamentation in the shape of an overmantel of simple lines, as in the illustrations appended from my collection. These overmantels may be ruled by the collector to suit any number or grouping of stamps. With the guiding lines of the *quadrillé* the ruling is a very simple matter. Then comes the question of the number of stamps to a page. The most effective page is that on which the stamps are not crowded and are evenly spaced. When the sets or series are full ones of from seven to eleven and upwards, an effective display may be made on separate pages as in the illustrations. The stamps, evenly spaced, should be grouped together in the centre of the page. When the issues are small, say up to six, they may be grouped separately, two or three sets on the same page. The year of issue, watermark, and perforation should be neatly added, preferably at the top. When a larger page is adopted than the No. 3 Cistafile cards illustrated, it will generally be found advisable to arrange each series in one, two, or three lines, according to the number of stamps in the series; the year of issue, watermark, and perforation to be written in a line over each series. Great rarities should generally be isolated, to give them a more emphatic display.

One great advantage in giving a card or page to each separate issue is that if the collector ever feels tempted to open out into the specialism of varieties, he has only to insert a card or a leaf following the series yielding the varieties to be added, or, if he later on wishes to thin out the varieties for disposal he has only to lift out those cards or detach those leaves containing them.

The enthusiastic collector nowadays, if he can afford it, does not part with his printed album.

He sticks to it as an old friend, and he transfers to his blank album, or Cistafile, only those countries to which he intends in future to specially devote time and money. Some day he may feel at liberty to open out another country, and then it is that he pats himself on the back for having stuck to his old album. I have never yet known a collector who parted with his first album who did not rue his shortsightedness and folly.

I append reduced illustrations of four Cistafile cards from my collection. The original size is nine inches in height by six inches in width. They will serve to illustrate what I mean by overmantel ornamentation and the grouping of stamps for effective display. I have found the following grouping most effective :— Set of seven, 1, 3, 3; eight, 1, 3, 3, 1; nine, 1, 3, 1, 3, 1; ten, 1, 3, 3, 3; eleven, 1, 3, 3, 3, 1; twelve, 3, 3, 3, 3; thirteen, 1, 3, 3, 3, 3; fourteen, 2 (as 3 with the centre space left for note of watermark and perforation), 3, 3, 3, 3; fifteen, 3, 3, 3, 3, 3. It will be noted that whenever possible these groupings provide for a single stamp at the top. This allows a neat space for notes—on the one side for the watermark, on the other for the perforation.

Reviews.

A New Idea in Albums.

MESSRS. WHITFIELD KING AND CO. have published a new album for the general collector on new lines. Instead of the unsightly and confusing full size illustrations filling blanks where the stamps are to be placed, mostly made in Germany, miniature reductions indicate the types and positions of a series. These can never be mistaken for stamps, and are always fully covered by a stamp when mounted on its space. The publishers announce that this album is "specially introduced to meet the wishes of collectors who desire a high class illustrated album, which provides spaces for standard varieties only, excluding perforation measurements, and minor varieties," and with every space numbered to correspond with their excellent catalogue.

The work is well got up throughout, and is clearly and cleanly printed on one side of the leaf only on superior paper.

Catalogues for 1905.

Already Messrs. Bright and Son have made a start with catalogues for 1905. They send us their sixth edition of the "A.B.C." descriptive catalogue of the world's postage stamps, envelopes, &c., now bulking up to a book of 866 pages. In many cases the lists have been re-written to bring them up to date and in line with recent discoveries, and a large number of new and improved illustrations have been added. The publishers have very wisely issued in a separate volume of 650 pages the section of the catalogue dealing with adhesive postage stamps only. Very few collectors now add envelopes and postcards. The full catalogue is priced as before, 2s. 6d., and the Adhesive Postage Stamp Section 1s. 6d.

Notable Novelties.

There are few changes to note or in prospect beyond the changes which are being steadily made in the single CA. to multiple CA. watermarks on our British Colonials. Collectors who are interested in those colonies whose stamps are liable to this change of watermark should not wait to complete sets of the single CA. till the multiple is reported, as they may run the risk of having to pay heavily for the delay. The single CA., 9 piastres, of Cyprus, which was on sale for a short time at 1s. 6d., is priced in Bright's latest catalogue at 12s., a very tall price.

Cook Islands stamps, we are told, are being continued by the courtesy of the Postal Union, and that before long the Postal Union requirements will probably insist upon the use of New Zealand stamps, overprinted or otherwise.

We are to have a new series shortly for Belgium.

The new shade of the English halfpenny value has not made its appearance at the time of writing.

Canada.—The stamps of the King's head series are coming out very slowly. The latest addition is the 20 cents, just received. Perf. 12.

1 cent, green.
2 cents, carmine.
5 cents, deep blue.
7 cents, olive yellow.
10 cents, puce.
20 cents, olive green.

Cape of Good Hope.—The King's head set has at last been completed by the issue of the 2d. value. As with all the others of the series it is of separate design.

Wmk. anchor. Perf. 12.

½d., green.
1d., rose.
2d., dark brown.
2½d., blue.
3d., magenta.
4d., olive green.

6d., mauve.
1s., ochre.
5s., orange brown.

Ceylon.—The 4c. and 6c. of the current King's head types have been received with the multiple CA. watermark.

Wmk. Multiple CA. Perf. 14.

4 cents orange, value ultramarine.
6 cents carmine.

And the 1r. 50c. King's head watermarked single CA. of the same design as the 4c. has been issued.

Wmk. Single CA. Perf. 14.

1r. 50c., dark grey.

Denmark.—For the first time this country has had recourse to surcharging to make up for values which had run short. The 8 öre has been surcharged with a peculiar figure "4," and the 24 öre with the figures "15" over the figures "24" on each side as illustrated.

Provisionals.

4 öre on 8 öre, carmine and slate.
15 öre on 24 öre, brown.

Hong Kong.—Several values of the current King's head series have been received with the new multiple watermark. The single CA. set have had a very short life, for they first made their appearance early in the present year.

Wmk. Multiple CA. Perf. 14.

2c. green.
4c. purple on red paper.
5c. orange and green.
20c. grey and chestnut.
30c. grey green and black
50c. grey green and magenta.
$1. purple and sage green.
$2. grey and carmine.

Johore.—A new set has been issued here of the same design as before, but with the head of the present Sultan.

Wmk. Quatrefoil. Perf. 14.

1c.	purple,	value tablet	green	
2c.	,,	,,	,,	orange.
3c.	,,	,,	,,	black.
4c.	,,	,,	,,	carmine.
5c.	,,	,,	,,	sage green.
8c.	,,	,,	,,	blue
10c.	,,	,,	,,	black.
25c.	,,	,,	,,	green

Somaliland Protectorate.—The full set of the King's head type for this Protectorate has been received. The low values up to and including the 12 annas are of the ordinary small size. The rupee values are of the same design, but larger size. The small size are all watermarked single CA. and the larger size CC. The full set is as follows :—

Wmk. Single CA. Perf. 14.

½a. green, centre dark green.
1a. carmine, centre grey-black.
2a. purple, centre dark-purple.
2½a. blue, centre dark blue.
3a. green, centre purple.
4a. black, centre green.
6a. lilac, centre dark-green.
8a. turquoise blue, centre grey-black
12a. orange yellow, centre grey-black.

Wmk. CC. Perf. 14.

1 rupee, green, centre dark-green.
2 rupees, purple, centre dark-purple.
3 rupees, black, centre green.
5 rupees, carmine, centre grey-black.

Straits Settlements.—Already the 3 cents of the new King's head series of this colony has been received with the new multiple CA. watermark.

Wmk. Multiple CA. Perf. 14.

3 cents, purple.

ACKNOWLEDGMENTS.

We are indebted to the following firms for early copies of new issues :—

Ewen.—Ceylon, multiple CA., 4c. and 6c.; single CA., 1r., 50c.; Somaliland, full set, ½a. to 5r.; Straits Settlements, multiple CA., 3c.; Hong Kong, multiple CA., 2c., 4c., 5c., 20c., 30c., 50c., 1dol., and 2dol.

Stanley Gibbons.—Canada, 20c. King's head; Cape of Good Hope, King's head, 2d.

Whitfield King and Co.—Johore, set, 1c. to 25c.; Denmark, Provisionals 4öre and 15öre.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

M. M. H. (Croydon).—Sorry I cannot identify your stamp from your description.

G. W. (Patrick).—I do not recognise your stamps by your dates. There is no Cape Verde Islands' issue so early as 1870.

Sudan (New Zealand).—I am continually writing up small manageable countries in THE CAPTAIN. Take any of those lately dealt with, Sudan and Sarawak, for instance. You are indeed a lucky collector to get over £500 given you to mount and take your pick from. Yes, Cook Islands is a nice little country. The first issue is still cheap, and worth buying. If you are going in for such a tough job as the Native States of India, you cannot do better than get the monthly journal published by Stanley Gibbons for the last twelve months, and read Major Evans' articles thereon. I don't think they will yield much profit, if you are solely interested in that point of view.

THE DUFFER.

By R. S. WARREN BELL,

Author of "Jim Mortimer, Surgeon," "J. O. Jones," &c.

Illustrated by GORDON BROWNE, R.I.

SYNOPSIS.

THIS story concerns the fortunes of George Wellington Denver, a boy of sixteen, who spends several years at Silverdown, a public school, without achieving anything creditable. Finally, being very miserable, and anxious to escape from a disreputable set he is mixed up with, he procures his expulsion by breaking a very strict rule. On hearing that George has purposely brought this dishonour on himself, his father, Dr. Denver, gives the boy a severe horse-whipping. The thrashing is brought to an end by the intervention of Joyce, George's ten-year-old sister, and George dashes out into the storm which is raging at the time. Seeking a favourite spot under the cliffs (he lives at Mellerby, a small seaside place), he throws himself down and gives vent to his misery. There, soaked and forlorn, he is found by Munro, an artist, who occupies a bungalow near the beach. Munro befriends the boy and dries his clothes, but George, nevertheless, catches a severe cold. When he is well enough to leave his room his father tells him that he must go to school again, but George emphatically refuses to do so. Eventually he is given temporary employment in the office of Garrick and Mappin, a firm of Mellerby solicitors. Mr. Mappin, the junior partner, admires Molly, George's pretty sister of seventeen, and it is with the hope of improving his relations with the Denver family that he offers George this post. The boy, though he tries his best, does not give much satisfaction at the solicitors' office, and it is the opinion of Andrews, the managing clerk, that he will never do any good at this kind of work. George, however, has a considerable talent for music, and he is encouraged to persevere in this direction by Mr. Wall, organist at Mellerby parish church, who gives him lessons for nothing. Living in the town is a very old lady, named Mrs. Pardoe, said to be a centenarian. This old lady, who is very sharp-witted, considering her years, keeps in touch with the Denver family by the unconscious agency of little Joyce, who, when some trouble has arisen, or when she particularly wants anything, writes a letter to God, and posts it in an old oak tree which stands near Mrs. Pardoe's garden. These letters are taken out of the tree by Mrs. Pardoe. In one of them Mrs. Pardoe learns that Munro, the artist, is very poor, and so by way of assisting him she commissions him to paint her portrait. In the course of the story it is shown how Munro incurs the enmity of John Blunt (nicknamed, on account of his appearance, "Black Jack"), a huge boatman of disreputable character. One day Blunt publicly insults Munro, and in the course of the encounter that follows gets much the worst of it. Burning with a desire for revenge, the ruffian waits for the artist late that night by the latter's bungalow. Whilst a thunderstorm is raging, Blunt sees the figure of a man approaching the bungalow door. Taking this to be Munro, Blunt fells him with a boat-hook, and is about to repeat the blow when the prostrate man is killed by a flash of lightning, and by the glare of the lightning Blunt sees that his victim is not Munro, but Dr. Denver. All efforts to find Black Jack prove fruitless, and he is supposed to have escaped out to sea in a rowing-boat. It is computed that when the practice has been sold the three children will have about sixty pounds a year to live upon. Mrs. Pardoe, who has recently bought a farm near Mellerby, commissions Munro to offer the children free quarters at the farmhouse. When Munro calls at The Cables to put this proposal before them, he is told by Molly that a London theatrical manager has offered her an engagement, and that she would like to have his advice on the matter. Munro is against her taking the engagement, nevertheless, Molly departs for London, and ultimately adopts the stage as her profession. Mrs. Pardoe's offer of accommodation is accepted, and George and Joyce remove to the farm. Munro goes up to town for the winter, and Mappin makes frequent visits to London, ostensibly on business, but really with the object of seeing Molly. Apparently the girl does not favour his advances, for his temper grows very short, and at Christmas he informs George that his services will no longer be required by Garrick and Mappin after the commencement of the New Year.

BOOK II.

CHAPTER XII.

BARRY AND THE BERESFORDS.

IT was on the day preceding Christmas Eve that George received this notice, which took the form of a letter in Mappin's own handwriting. The boy found it awaiting him at the farm on his return from work in the evening. After clearing up matters at the office, Mappin had departed in the afternoon for Switzerland, there to cultivate forgetfulness of Molly's charms in the strenuous game of ice-hockey. During his absence the affairs of the firm would be controlled by Andrews and Mr. Garrick—who had decided definitely to sever his connection with the business early in the New Year. Mappin said nothing to the senior partner about his dismissal of Dr. Denver's son, and George did not dream of mentioning the subject to the old gentleman when he went to the office on the following day. So Mr. Garrick remained in complete ignorance of his junior's action, and was no wiser when, on Mappin's return, he sought sunnier climes in which to spend the remainder of the bleak English winter.

On Christmas Eve Barry looked in at the office for a few minutes before catching the

train that was to bear him home for his doubtfully-earned holiday.

George apprised the articled clerk of what had befallen him.

"I'm afraid you won't find me here when you come back," he said. "Mappin's given me the sack."

"*What?*" demanded Barry, pausing open-mouthed in the act of igniting a large cigar.

"I've got the sack," said George, in a tone which he endeavoured to make as unconcerned as possible.

Barry dropped into a chair by his friend's side.

"Do you mean to say you've been told to go?"

George handed him Mappin's letter. Barry read it.

"Well, he is a pig!" exclaimed the outspoken youth. "You're all right—you've done your work properly, and all that. He's done it out of spite because he can't get hold of your sister."

"I don't know why he's done it, but there it is," said George, turning wearily to the work that lay before him.

"But, look here—how about the old man? Mappin *can't* sack you. Look here—ask Mr. Garrick whether you must go!"

"Mr. Garrick himself is going at the end of the year," explained George. "I'm staying till then. He can't make Mappin keep me on after that."

"Oh, I forgot," returned Barry, looking utterly perplexed and much upset. The office wouldn't be the same place without Denver, he knew. They were both public school men and had many interests in common. Barry never had much to say to anyone else.

His indignation at length found a vent in unlimited abuse of the junior partner.

"I tell you what it is, Denver, Mappin's a rank outsider. I've always hated the beast, and now I hate him worse than ever. This takes the cake for meanness and at Christmas-time, too, the bounder!"

"He's got a perfect right to sack me if he likes," put in George.

"And I'm hanged if I'll stay on in this mouldy office any longer," continued Barry, furiously. "What good am I doing? Even if I turned up punctually every day, Mappin wouldn't bother about me. He's a pretty feeble chap to learn law with, I tell you. I like the old man well enough, but I'm blowed if I stay on here now Mappin's going to run the show on his own. That will be altogether too too-tooey for your humble servant!"

And Barry pulled viciously at his cigar until a testy examination of the weed informed him that it had gone out

"Don't miss your train," said George, as Barry, having relighted his cigar, proceeded to smoke in silence.

Barry raised his eyebrows indifferently and went on thinking. He was not a fool, and not so entirely devoted to an idle life as some people might have imagined. The dismissal of the one person in the office he cared to talk to had brought him up sharp in his wayward career and given him food for reflection. He wished to adopt some sort of career, and he saw that he and the Law would never agree. What then?

Andrews being engaged on the firm's business out in the town somewhere, Barry smoked on at pleasure. He forgot the passage of time, his thoughts being riveted on the question which is eternally confronting young men of his age—"*What shall I be?*" He had never read Emerson and therefore had never learned that a man should do *what he can do best*; it had never occurred to him up to this time to consult his powers and discover the vocation for which he was intellectually and temperamentally best suited. But now he was really taking into serious consideration his future course of life. He was young, he was strong, he was not in need of money; he hated this law business. What, therefore, should he do?

Barry was an unimaginative, plain-sailing young man. He had never been inspired by the reading of a worthy book to "do noble deeds"; he preferred play to work, but he came of a working stock, and there lurked in him a vague unrest regarding his future. He did not wish to spend an idle, profitless existence. At the same time, he hated Garrick and Mappin's. The low-roofed, oak-panelled offices had no fascination for him; to him the yews without, hoary veterans which delighted the eyes of visitors to Mellerby, were simply trees that kept out the light. In brief, Barry was very modern, devoid of all romance, much given to the art of amusing himself, but not unmindful of the fact that a life without some serious occupation is not the life that a man, deserving of the name, should choose to lead.

George looked at the clock again. "What time does your train go?" he asked.

Barry consulted his watch, which he judged to be a more reliable time-keeper than the office clock.

"Quarter of an hour from now," he said, "and I've got to go to my digs, pack, get a cab, and drive half-a-mile to the station. No go—I shall miss it."

"Miss it!" cried George

"I'll spend Christmas with *you*," said Barry, in a sudden burst of friendship. "I'm not particularly keen on going home, because if I do the gov'nor's bound to ask me how I'm getting on, and I'm bound to tell him that I don't care a hang about the law, and that'll make him cut up rough. When I'm admitted he's awfully keen on my going into partnership with a johnny at our place that I bar. See? Old man means well, and I came here to please him, but I know I sha'n't stick here very long."

"Won't your people be sick with you for not going home for Christmas?" asked George.

"Not very. The gov'nor will think I'm 'tied to the office' by an extra special rush of work. . . . Tell you what—I'll get old Lawson to give a party. Good idea, eh?"

"I should think he'll have a fit at the thought," returned George.

"Not he. I'll try the old boy and see what comes of it. Look here, it's your lunch hour now, so I'll stand you a young feed at the 'Swan,' and then we'll go and see how they're getting on with the decorating."

Mr. Barry's motives for visiting the church were not wholly those of one interested in the adornment of sacred edifices at festival times. For some months he had been paying somewhat laboured attentions to one of the Miss Peels, and he knew his Miss Peel was assisting with the decorations. Now, if ever a young man can make himself useful to a young lady, it is when she is enhancing the natural beauty of a gasalier with evergreens, or bestrewing the ledge of a window with holly and everlastings, over a snowy groundwork of cotton-wool. Then, too, putting up texts necessitates the use of hammer and tacks, while the enveloping of stone pillars with laurel wreaths is a task which demands that the gallant male attendant shall mount a ladder and prove his mettle on a lofty spoke of doubtful stability.

Having partaken of a hasty but hearty snack of cold beef, bread, and pickles, followed by honest Stilton and celery, Barry and George repaired to the church, where they found the work of decorating in full blast. Mr. Wall was trotting about with pins and pieces of string. Mr. Deadwood, very large in a check suit of a pattern that almost called out to you, was looking on while his sister Mabel and a certain young lady, to whom we have already made some slight sentimental reference, adorned the stately old pulpit; busy hands and dainty hats were in evidence all over the church, indeed. Peeping into the vestry, George discovered Mr. Thompson, the Vicar, carefully setting the spotless, newly-washed surplices to air before the big fire that was burning in the ancient grate; everybody, it would seem, had his or her Christmas occupation.

Barry's Miss Peel was decorating a window. Observing his diffident approach, the young lady smiled encouragingly.

"Can I help you?" he asked.

"Oh, yes, please, Mr. Barry! I want some nice little bits of holly and some sprigs of yew. There's a big heap of all sorts of things outside the north door. You will find what I want there—and don't be long!"

Only too delighted to be of service, Barry hurried off to the north door, and passing out to the narrow passage the door gave on to found there piles of evergreens, but only one bush of holly. Standing over this bush were Harold and Edmund Beresford, whom Barry had not met since he encountered them at the garden-party given by their people in August. Each wore a heavy coat, with the collar turned up, a scarf, and white woollen gloves. While Harold, the elder of the two, held a small piece of holly, Edmund sawed at it with a penknife.

George, seeing Barry go into the passage, sauntered out after him.

"Hullo!" said Barry. "You chaps here?"

They surveyed him superciliously. Then Harold said: "Yes, we are here. How are you?"

"Oh, all right. What are you doing to that piece of holly?"

"We are cutting it off for our sisters," said Edmund, plying his penknife with a little more vigour.

"Oh, so they're decorating too?"

"The font," said Edmund, at length severing the unfortunate morsel of holly from its mother branch and adding it to a number of other morsels, lying on the ground, which appeared to have been submitted to the same painful process of decapitation.

"Find it rather a long job, don't you?" asked Barry. "Why didn't you bring a hatchet? Afraid of cutting your toes off?"

"No, we were afraid of cutting off the toes of anybody who came and talked nonsense to us when we were busy," replied Harold.

Barry glared at him. Then he said: "Well, after you with that holly-bush. I want some of it for Miss Peel."

Without appearing to have heard the remark, the elder Beresford seized another unoffending twig and poised it for his brother to operate upon. Barry watched them with a scornful grin upon his face. This twig having given up

the ghost, another was picked out for execution.

"Look here," said Barry, impatiently, "if you are afraid of getting your fingers pricked, *I'm* not. Let *me* have a go at the thing."

"Thank you—we do not desire assistance," replied Harold Beresford. "And as *we* sent the holly-bush, surely we may be allowed to cut twigs off it."

"No," said Harold, gravely, "we do not dance."

"Don't like getting hot, eh?" suggested Barry.

"We don't like catching cold," replied Harold. "People often catch cold after dances, you know."

"Well," continued Barry, desperately, "do you play games? You see, I'm going to persuade old Lawson to give a kick-up at the Hall this Christmas, and I was wondering if you'd like to come."

STANDING OVER THIS BUSH WERE HAROLD AND EDMUND BERESFORD.

"Snob!" muttered Barry in George's ear.

George said nothing, but felt highly amused. He had not forgotten how Barry had been discomfited by the Beresford brothers at the garden-party. The blunt articled clerk was no match, verbally, for these anæmic molly-coddles, though physically he could have accounted for both of them with one hand.

"I say," observed Barry, after a short silence, "do you fellows dance?"

"Yes, we play games—some games," said Edmund, getting to work on a fresh twig.

"Post, turn-the-trencher, musical chairs, &c.?" queried Barry.

"No," said Harold. "We only play draughts—and sometimes chess."

"Why not spillikins?" inquired Barry, sarcastically.

"Spillikins is too rough," explained Edmund, with a serious face.

George laughed outright, and it began to dawn on Barry that the Beresfords were chaffing him.

"Well, look here—hurry up with that bush!" he exclaimed shortly. "You've cut quite enough off it."

"Pardon me!" said Harold. "Our sisters will require twice this quantity."

"Where *are* your sisters?" demanded Barry. "I didn't see them in the church."

"No, they haven't arrived yet," explained Edmund. "We wish to have the holly ready for them by the time they get here."

"Great Scott!" exclaimed Barry. "And all this time Miss Peel is waiting for some holly. Why can't you let me cut off what I want?"

"We shall have finished shortly," said Harold; "then you may take as much as you like."

For some minutes Barry stood and watched them in sullen silence as they slowly mangled and hacked the poor holly-bush. He chafed at the delay, for he particularly desired to win Miss Peel's favourable regard. And to think these two wrapped-up nincompoops should be deliberately standing between himself and the smiles of his lady-love!

"See here, Beresford," he said, at length, turning abruptly to Harold, "did your people send this holly for the general weal, so to speak?"

"Yes, they certainly sent it for the general weal, as you call it."

"Not for the font only?"

"Oh, dear, no!"

"Thanks," said Barry. "Well, now, listen. As your sisters haven't come yet, you've got plenty of time—and there's plenty more holly to cut. Miss Peel wants some holly at once, and," he added, with a sudden change of tone, "as you silly duffers don't seem inclined to let me in, why——"

He stopped abruptly and made a dive at the pile of holly sprigs the two brothers had amassed. Unheeding of their expostulations, he gathered up all they had cut and bore them off to Miss Peel, who received him and the holly with a beaming face and many grateful words.

And George, looking upon the rueful countenances of the bereaved couple, was fain to admit that Barry had scored the odd trick—and not unrighteously, all things considered.

"What did they do?" asked Barry, when he and George left the church together an hour later.

"They went home," replied George, laughing, "and left their sisters to cut the holly for themselves. It was too much for them."

"Good egg!" said Barry, gleefully. "I had the cuckoos that time!"

CHAPTER XIII.

GEORGE MAKES A PRESENT.

GEORGE brightened up visibly when, on leaving the church, Barry once more announced his intention of spending Christmas at Mellerby, and putting in as much time as possible at the farm. The articled clerk was so full of life and health, so bristling with energy, that it was impossible to be dull in his company. Perhaps the two youths had become such good friends because George, prone to spells of brooding, was diametrically opposed in temperament to his loquacious, boisterous office companion.

"Look here," said Barry, "I'm going to have my Christmas dinner at the farm," and with the words he wheeled into a poulterer's.

"I say, I want a goose," he observed to the young man at the counter

"Goose, sir? Yessir. What size goose, sir?"

"Oh, a big one."

George nudged his friend. "There'll be heaps to eat at the farm, old chap. Don't waste your money."

But the shopman was already displaying the rounded charms of a fine bird for Barry's inspection.

"How much?" asked Barry, surveying the goose with critical eyes, although he really knew nothing about such creatures, and was completely at the shopman's mercy.

The bird was weighed. "Twelve pounds at tenpence a pound—ten shillings, sir."

"Right O! Send it to Miss Denver, at the Hall Farm, will you, with Mr. Barry's compliments?"

"Very good, sir."

As they left the shop George grasped his friend by the arm.

"It's awfully good of you, Barry," he said, "but we really don't want a goose. We've got any amount of poultry up at the farm. In fact, we supply this shop, and that's probably one of our own birds. Tell you what—I'll buy that goose off you."

"Rot!" said Barry. "What d'you want it for?"

"I want to give it to somebody."

"Who?"

"A friend of mine. My uncle sent me a quid this morning, so I can afford it."

"I'll make you a present of it," said Barry, magnificently.

"No, I'll buy it off you," repeated George, in his dogged way.

"Oh, all right, then," said Barry, shortly. "I'm going to contribute something to your Christmas dinner, though, so you go and get the goose, and meet me again at Miggs's."

Journeying on to the emporium of Miggs, grocer and provision dealer, Barry laid out a sovereign in almonds and raisins, sugar-plums, figs, oranges, and nuts from Brazil. These the bowing tradesman promised to send up to Miss Denver without the least delay. Then Barry—after scanning the street in vain for George—walked into a wine-merchant's and purchased a bottle of old port, which he dispatched to the same address. Returning to Miggs's, and not finding George there, it occurred to him that he ought to send a wire to his people explaining that he was not returning home for Christmas. He headed, therefore, for the post-office, where he compiled a telegram of prodigious length, for, thinking to save himself the trouble of writing a letter, he took this opportunity of dispatching Christmas greetings to the various members of his home circle, mentioning each one by name, and inquiring after their several ailments with due solicitude. Having dispatched this mammoth missive, he returned to Miggs's to wait for Denver.

The latter, on receiving the goose from the hands of the shopman, set forth with all speed to Mr. Wall's house, which was situated in a narrow, rather dark, street, near the church. George knocked somewhat timidly, and to his consternation the door was opened by Mr. Wall himself, the organist having left the church soon after the two boys.

"Oh," said George, turning crimson, and holding the goose well behind his back, "I thought I would just call and wish you——"

"Come in, George, come in," cried Mr. Wall, clasping the boy's free hand. "I'm so glad to see you. Come in and see Mrs. Wall."

Still holding his parcel behind his back, George allowed himself to be led into the tiny parlour, where he found Mrs. Wall, a pale, melancholy-looking lady, sitting by the fire. Mrs. Wall, as we have already stated in the course of this chronicle, was by way of being an invalid, for her nerves were in a sad state of disrepair, and she suffered from chronic indigestion. Beyond these items there was nothing much the matter with her; in fact, her case was not dissimilar to Mr. Lawson's, with the exception that while Mr. Lawson did get out of the house, Mrs. Wall never went out at all.

Mellerby was rich in such ailing folk, but the majority of them did not have to work for a living. They resided in comfortable villas on the outskirts of the town, sent their children to the excellent schools that had sprung up in the place, and patronised the local chemists in a regal manner. Indeed, if half the money lavished on quack medicines by the inhabitants of Mellerby had been bestowed on the Church, its incumbent, and its organist, Mr. Thompson and his good wife would have been spared all sorts of desperate endeavours—in the shape of concerts, rummage sales, and occasional bazaars—to procure money for surplices and cassocks, hymn-books, choir treats, and like necessaries; the Vicar himself would have been saved much anxious brow-knitting when his quarterly bills came in, and the organist a deal of sad pinching and scraping to make ends meet. Yet—brave hearts!—each strove his best to do his duty and pay his way in spite of the lukewarm support and apathetic attitude that characterised all save a few of the congregation. It is a matter for sad and painful reflection to observe what a man will spend on his sitting-room walls, his table, his conservatory and his garden, in comparison with the niggardly dole that he drops into the plate when he goes to a church with leaking roof and coffers well-nigh empty.

"This is George Denver, my dear," said the organist. "George, my wife. Now, George, a glass of wine? You can have tea after."

George, feeling most uncomfortable, slipped the goose down on to the floor. Mr. Wall poured him out a glass of wine, and George drank to his host and hostess, Mrs. Wall heaving a deep sigh as she acknowledged his good wishes.

"George is my most promising pupil, my dear," said the little organist, rubbing his hands together. "He is going to be a great musician—eh, George? Oh, yes—there's no mistaking the real article. George will be a composer."

He raised his glass, his careworn face alight with satisfaction over George's prowess. He had no thoughts then for his own blighted career—he felt only pleasure and pride in the boy's achievements.

"It is very nice of you to come and see us on Christmas Eve, George," the organist went on. "You are our only visitor. Now, then, my dear, how about tea?"

"Annie is getting it ready," replied Mrs. Wall, giving a little shiver as she stirred the fire up to fresh efforts—the room already being

as hot as an oven, and Mr. Wall in an uncomfortable state of perspiration.

The organist went into the hall. "Be quick, Annie. We have company, so toast two more scones, please."

"My friend Barry is waiting for me," said George. "I'm afraid I can't stay."

"Oh, you needn't stay long. Besides, he won't mind waiting. He has something to say to everybody. Never knew such a fellow to talk as Mr. Barry. My dear, what do you fancy for tea?—will you try a scone?"

"It would kill me," replied Mrs. Wall, with a grimace. "I will have my wafers," she added, pointing to the sideboard with a bony forefinger.

Mr. Wall took a tin out of the sideboard and put it on the mantelpiece near his wife. By its side he placed a little bottle of dyspepsia tabloids.

"Tell Annie not to forget my hot water," said Mrs. Wall. "Are you at home for your holidays now, Mr. Denver?" she added, turning a gloomy eye on George.

"You forget, my dear. Mr. Denver doesn't go to school. He is with Garrick and Mappin. Ah! here's Annie and the tea!" he concluded, as an under-sized, hungry-looking maidservant came staggering in with the tray. To Mr. Wall's credit be it said that he always endeavoured to give his domestic all the food she needed, but, unlike her mistress, Annie was afflicted with perpetual hunger. The word "enough" did not appear to be included in her limited vocabulary.

"Mrs. Wall's hot water, please, Annie," added the organist.

"Not Mrs. Wall's *boiling* water," put in Mrs. Wall, as she opened her biscuit tin and drew forth a sickly-looking wafer. "She brought it in scalding at dinner-time to-day," the lady explained for George's benefit. "At breakfast it was lukewarm. I expect it will be cold to-morrow."

George tried to look duly interested. He wondered how Mrs. Wall would feel when she saw that mountainous goose which was lying under his chair.

"Now, George, a hot scone?" said Mr. Wall, briskly. "Take your coat off, or you'll catch cold when you go out. These are Yorkshire scones—the best in the world."

Mr. Wall came from Yorkshire, where, at Christmas-time, everyone who has sixpence in his pocket, it has been said, spends fivepence of it on making somebody else happy. The little man's face beamed with pleasure as he did the honours of his house. His purse was very lean, his health bad, his prospects anything but encouraging, but nothing could dim the kind light in his eyes, or cause him to cast a blur upon Christmas with a single complaint, a single regret.

George simply had to stay and eat the scones. When he at length rose to his feet, and put his coat on, his departure was a matter Mr. Wall never forgot.

"You've been awfully kind to me," said George, when he had shaken hands with his host on the doorstep, "and I wanted to thank you in some way, so I brought you a present ——"

"Present?" echoed Mr. Wall in astonishment.

"It's under the chair I sat on," said George. "Good-bye, sir—a happy Christmas to you."

Then he dashed off at top speed, to find Barry stamping his feet and growling in Miggs's doorway.

Mr. Wall went back to his hot little parlour. He wiped his brow as Mrs. Wall heaped more coal into the gorged grate.

"Mr. Denver says he has brought us a goose. Here it is!" he added, stripping the paper wrappings off the bird. "What a splendid fellow! My dear, you once said I was a fool to give that boy lessons for nothing. You see—he has remembered. God bless and help the good lad!"

Mrs. Wall smiled wanly. "Very thoughtful of Mr. Denver, I'm sure. Pity I can't touch it."

And she gazed pensively at the patent wafer which she was nibbling.

"Oh, you must make an effort, my dear—you must make an effort. A little piece of this excellent goose won't do you any harm."

"Why do you talk about making efforts when you know I *daren't* make them!" cried Mrs. Wall, dissolving into tears.

"My dearest!" cried the organist, soothingly. "Do cheer up! It's Christmas Eve, you know."

But Mrs. Wall only shook her head despondently.

"I shall be in my grave before next Christmas Eve," she replied, in a hollow voice.

Mr. Wall wagged his head philosophically as he carried the goose into the kitchen, where the small servant surveyed it wolfishly.

"There," said the organist, "that's for you and me, Annie, as your mistress says she can't touch a bit of it. Fine bird, eh?"

But the small servant could only clap her hands and laugh hysterically at the mere thought of such a banquet.

CHAPTER XIV.

THE TAIL-END OF A NIGHTMARE.

TRUE to his word, Barry spent the whole of Christmas Day with his friends the Denvers. Like a good Catholic, he went to mass in the morning. The brewer, having attended the same service, hurried back to his warm dining-room, where Barry, who followed him through the private passage connecting Hall and Chapel, found him shedding his wraps.

"Merry Christmas, sir," said Barry jovially; "hope you don't mind my coming in this way!"

"Not at all, not at all," replied Mr. Lawson. "I wish you the same. How is it you are not at home?"

"Circumstances caused me to remain in Mellerby!" said Barry, vaguely.

"Hum!" remarked the brewer. "Your people will be disappointed." And Mr. Lawson cast a glance of mild reproval on the young man.

Barry sat down. He had discovered by experience that when he was with the master of the Hall it was no use waiting to be asked to do anything. Mr. Lawson, though naturally civil enough, generally forgot, in his nervousness, the little civilities one looks for from a man owning a house with forty rooms in it. For instance, Barry might reasonably have expected his host to ask him to take one of the two hundred chairs the place possessed.

"Talking about Christmas, sir," he said, crossing his legs—"er, you don't mind my smoking?"

"Certainly not. Perhaps you will try one of these cigars."

The invalid walked shakily to the sideboard and returned with a box of excellent Murins. Barry was well aware of their existence.

"Oh, thank you very much," said the caller. "These are first-rate weeds of yours, sir."

"Yes, I believe they are—I believe they are." Mr. Lawson returned the box to the sideboard. "I don't smoke myself—at least, very little. An occasional cigarette."

"You should try a pipe, sir," said Barry. "Grand thing for the nerves."

Mr. Lawson coughed coldly. He did not like people to refer to nerves.

"Well, talking about Christmas, sir," recommenced Barry, "I was wondering whether you would care to give some sort of a show here?"

"A *show*!" exclaimed Mr. Lawson, glancing apprehensively at the door. Though its edges were well-padded with baize, he fancied he felt a draught blowing on the back of his neck from that direction. And he was nervous about the back of his neck. A doctor had once been ill-advised enough to tell him that the back of the neck and the ankles were the happy hunting-grounds of draughts that started colds.

"A party," explained Barry. "A dance, with games, and all that sort of thing. You will excuse me for suggesting it, but I thought it might cheer you up. Trifle lonesome here, isn't it?"

"The gaiety here is not maddening," acknowledged the brewer, with unexpected humour; "well, I will give a party—yes, I will give a party on condition that *you* send out the invitations and get it up. And you must not forget to ask a little girl living at the Hall Farm. I had the pleasure of helping her pick blackberries in the autumn."

"Joyce Denver," said Barry.

"Yes, that is her name. And she has a brother—ask him, too. Now, remember—you must see to everything. And you must not expect me to dance, or—er—play games. I am past such things. Blind man's buff, for example. A man in my state of health——"

Barry laughed. "All right, sir. We sha'n't expect you to play blind man's buff. I'll bring some fellows called Beresford especially to talk to you. They don't like games, either."

"Don't they?" exclaimed the brewer. "Then don't ask 'em."

"I'll ask them if you don't mind," said Barry. "They may be persuaded to dance, after all. The Highland Fling would be about their mark."

And with a chuckle he rose to go.

It now dawned upon the brewer that this was Christmas-time, the season of hospitality, open house, and good-fellowship.

"Come," said the poor man, forcing a smile that was meant to be genial, "you must have something before you go. How about a mince pie?"

"Excellent idea," said Barry.

Mr. Lawson rang for the mince pie.

"Glass of port?"

"Thanks," said Barry, who seldom said "no" to anything.

"Another cigar?"

"Oh, you're very kind, sir."

"Take two or three. Go on, my boy—take plenty. Christmas-time, you know."

Barry ate his mince pie, quaffed his port, and helped himself to a handful of cigars.

"Upon my word, sir," said he, "you do do a man well. I'm glad you and the gov'nor were chums at school."

"So am I," replied the brewer, holding out his white, flabby hand. "I remember him well. A little rough, but staunch and true. Well, good-bye! Give my—do you think the little lady will be offended if I send my love to her?"

"No," said Barry, speaking in a strangely gentle voice for so uncouth a personage. "I think she will be very pleased. Good-bye, sir."

Barry had never been accustomed to study people's feelings very much. Hitherto he had gone along noisily on his way through the world, physically and metaphorically treading on other folks' toes. But lately a new influence seemed to have been working in his veins, and he had actually found himself thinking about somebody else.

"Poor, lonely old buffer!" he muttered, as he trod the frosty footpath leading to the farm. "All that brass and can't enjoy a penny of it. I'm sorry for the old boy—I really am."

After performing prodigies with his knife and fork at the dinner-table, Barry walked round the farm with the bailiff. George accompanied them for a little distance, but soon began to lag behind, and they presently lost sight of him. The bailiff, glad to have such a clear-brained companion, talked wisely of the farm's possibilities, of arable land that was lying fallow and of arable land that ought to be, of the late summer's yield of mushrooms, of forage crops, of the difficulty of finding enough work for the men at this season, of rain and snow, of sun and wind, of the weather he wanted and the weather he—like every farmer—could seldom get—to all of which Barry listened in such an interested way that at last the bailiff clapped him on the shoulder and told him he ought to be a farmer himself.

"I should like it above all things," said the articled clerk.

"Then why not be one?" returned the bailiff. "I believe a lad ought to follow his bent, if it's a reasonable one. I don't mean he ought to run away to sea after reading a book that makes him want to, but if he's a passion for it, and he's hearty, why—let him try the sea! There's many a good sailor rusting in a warehouse, and many a fine farmer groaning over law books," and he looked slyly at his sturdy young companion.

Barry walked on in silence—a silence which expressed his secret wishes more eloquently than many words could have done.

Meanwhile, George Denver was hanging over a gate, the picture of despair, his face white and set, his lips bloodless, his eyes full of dumb anguish. Many miserable moments he had experienced in his short career, but it is questionable whether he had ever passed through such a peculiarly trying ordeal as that which now held him in a relentless grip. True, but a short time since he had been laughing and chatting as gaily as anyone—happy for the nonce, in spite of the occupationless future that lay before him.

The December sky hung leaden and lifeless above the frost-bound earth, and George, surveying that sombre canopy with a glassy eye, felt himself to be the most wretched creature existing beneath it. You may say that this interlude strikes a jarring note on a festal occasion, but *I* say that no hero's career can be completely described unless some passing allusion be made to the torments that rack his unaccustomed stomach after his first bout with tobacco—for George's direful attitude was due to nothing more than the cigar which he had recklessly accepted from Barry when dinner came to an end.

The party which Barry organised at the Hall for—ostensibly—the benefit of its master, whom it was intended to enliven, plunged Mr. Lawson into a kind of nightmare which lasted well into the small hours of the morning, and ended with an episode which lingered in the poor brewer's brain for many days. When his wife and family were at home he kept to his own rooms as much as possible, and so was not particularly disturbed by their junketings. But on this New Year's Eve that Barry had fixed upon for the At Home—as he mildly described it upon the invitation cards—Mr. Lawson was obliged to play the genial host in a manner which was little to his liking. He had to talk to all sorts of young ladies the Blacketts, the Peels, the Rices, and the Beresfords were all there, in addition to many others—and ransack his bewildered brain for small nothings suitable to the occasion. And then, what a truly dreadful ordeal was supper, when he had to sit at the head of the table and drink everybody's health! Aye, and make a brief speech, bidding them all welcome, and hoping they would stay till daylight did appear. This latter was put into his mouth by Barry, who, sitting on his immediate left—Joyce having the lady's place of honour on his right—prompted him throughout.

He had no peace all the evening. Joyce insisted on his dancing "Sir Roger," and Barry said everybody would be disappointed if he didn't play "Oranges and Lemons," in which, whilst tugging at Dr. Deadwood's back, he

almost tore off the tails of that large and lively gentleman's dress-coat.

When the great clock in the tower was tolling twelve, Mr. Lawson had to stand in the hall and welcome the New Year in through the open front door—and with the New Year a cutting blast of wind which pierced him to the marrow. He was greatly surprised, indeed, on the following morning, to find that he hadn't caught the slightest symptom of a cold.

When the last carriage had rolled away Mr. Lawson, standing in the middle of the ball-room, brilliant with light and gay with the spoils of the hothouse, rubbed his eyes and tried to believe that it was all a dream. But the sound of a voice at his elbow reminded him that his valet was awaiting his pleasure.

Of course he dreamed, and while he dreamed it seemed to him that, as he lay in bed, there came a draught of cold air into the room, which

A VERY REALISTIC, HORRIBLE DREAM.

The articled clerk's ruddy countenance glowed with satisfaction at the success of his party. The most *blasé* youth present soon found himself behaving quite naturally in the genial warmth of his surroundings, and the coldest beauty thawed into ripples of laughter, so contagious were Mr. Barry's irrepressible high spirits. Even the Beresfords, after sitting in a corner by themselves for an hour, were infected, at length, by the general animation. Before the evening came to an end Harold found himself flirting desperately with one of the Miss Rices, while Edmund did actually, to his own great astonishment, lead out a Miss Blackett for the Highland Fling, did actually take the same lady in to supper, and did afterwards, with flushed cheeks, inform one of his sisters that he'd been having "a deuce of a time."

was followed by the striking of a match. Then—horror!—there appeared by his bedside a form of superhuman size, a black-bearded monster dressed somewhat after the manner of a seaman.

A candle was lighted, and then the brewer saw, in this awful dream, that black-bearded face poised above his own, while a hoarse whisper demanded his cash. With a trembling hand the brewer pointed to his clothes, which the intruder proceeded to rifle. Then the candle was suddenly extinguished, there was a sound of soft footsteps, of a window closing, of a stealthy scrambling and sliding—and silence.

Absolute silence. A queer dream, thought the brewer—a very realistic, horrible dream. It was the game pie. Of course. He ought

not to have eaten such a thing so late. The game pie—and a nightmare!

But in the morning, when one of the gardeners found the imprints of great boots on the lawn, leading towards the terrace, and then a ladder, flung down anyhow, it occurred to the gardener to follow up the tracks—and the visit of a burglar stood revealed.

And when it was found that a clean sweep had been made of all the money the brewer had been carrying in his clothes, it was clear that Mr. Lawson's nightmare had been a very real animal indeed—of the biped class, with very large hoofs.

CHAPTER XV.

IN THE NEW YEAR.

FROM the description which Mr. Lawson gave of his nocturnal visitant the police hazarded a conjecture, which amounted almost to a certainty, that their man was the badly-wanted Black Jack. They searched the caves along the shore, they peered into barns and outhouses, they notified all the police stations in the county afresh, and they even paid a visit to his modest dwelling-place. But, barring a rather suspicious smell of stale tobacco in the little back bedroom, they found no trace of him there. All they found was a little boy in a blue jersey and black knickerbockers, bare as to the legs, shock-headed and round-eyed. To all questions put to him the urchin maintained a stolid silence, and not even a bribe of a penny was able to drag a word from his lips, save to the effect that his mother was out and his father wasn't at home.

The police therefore retired, once more having to confess themselves baffled. The Mellerby people generally felt certain that Black Jack was lurking in the vicinity, and there was a great deal of bolting and turning of keys every night in the town, especially in the outlying homesteads. No householder could be sure that his turn would not come next. There even arose a brisk demand for watch-dogs, which bayed in chorus and made night so hideous that their owners soon began to think they were buying protection at too dear a price.

The landlord of the "Horse and Groom," the one person for whom Black Jack had entertained the slightest respect, was certain that the boatman was in hiding not far away.

"Although he's so big," declared Mr. Hicks. "he's got the cunning of a serpent, has Jack. Take my word, he'll be caught one day, and then you'll find that he's been about here all the time. Didn't he take the new doctor's watch?—and wasn't it clear he'd been living in a cave till then?"

"Ah," said the plum-coloured little man who had been bested by Mr. Mew at the auction, "but where's he been since? That's what *I* want to know. He's not been in any of them caves. Where, then, I ask?"

"Can't say—somewhere," replied the landlord. "He'll explain before he's hanged."

"Hanged?"

"Yes, he's a chap who was born to be hanged. Got it written across his jib. I'll bet a crown piece to a ha'porth of snuff on it."

Nobody accepted the offer, for all present felt that the landlord—a man of experience, considering the length of time he had served in the constabulary—was an expert in knowing faces that had "born to be hanged" written across them.

The incident, of course, soon blew over, although to various timid householders, going their last rounds at night, there generally loomed up, in imagination, a hairy face, wearing an expression of the utmost malignancy. Apprehensive ladies looked under their beds and in their wardrobes before retiring to rest—indeed, considering Black Jack's size, it was astonishing in what small spaces these ladies seemed to think the ruffian could conceal his vast bulk.

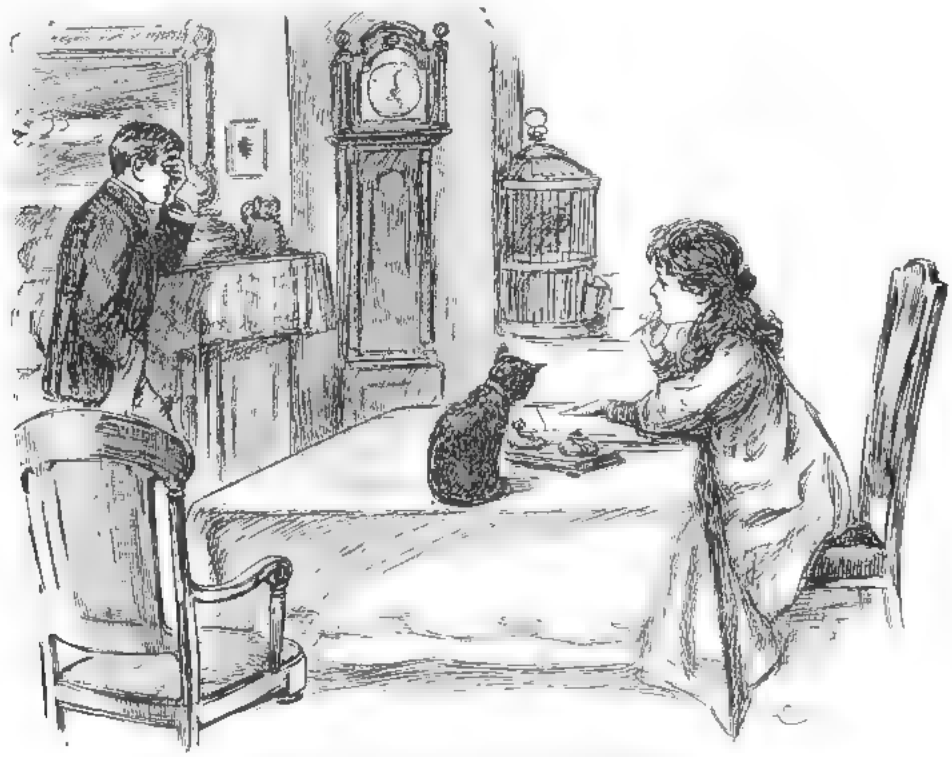
Joyce, for instance, regularly looked under her diminutive couch, which would hardly have concealed a boy of ten. The bailiff's wife, Mrs. Elphinstone, improved the occasion by treating Joyce to various creepy tales of burglars; it was not very nice of her to tell such tales, thought Joyce, though they were certainly a change from stories about illnesses. Mrs. Elphinstone's repertory, it will be observed, was not an elastic one.

As for George, he had no thoughts to spare for possible visits from Black Jack. For now, the New Year having arrived, George was fairly confronted by the awkward task of getting something to do. From the time of his home-coming from Silverdown until the present epoch, his affairs had not caused him much anxiety. His work at Garrick and Mappin's had presented many difficulties, and his sighs had been frequent, but when all was said and done he *had* a billet to go to, and a salary to draw every Friday evening. Now he had no billet and no salary—and all he and his sister possessed to subsist upon was forty pounds a year. For Molly, when she went to town, had been allowed to draw her income for twelve months in a lump, as it was necessary for her to

obtain all sorts of clothes. Although she had made quite a little hit in the small part allotted to her in *The Mayflower*, her salary was trifling, her employer not being the man to lavish gold on beginners. As she lived with her uncle she did not require all the salary she earned, but she knew that it was necessary for her to put a little money by against that day of "resting" which comes to every devotee to the art of Thespis, be he or she celebrity or supernumerary.

George was far too proud to elicit pecuniary help from his sister or uncle; he hoped to get another berth quite soon, and closely scanned the advertisements in the local papers for notices of vacancies. But nobody appeared to require a clerk with his very limited qualifications. True, he was requested to call on one man he applied to—a miller—but when the miller saw his handwriting he brought the interview to an abrupt conclusion. It occurred to him at one time that he might make use of his music by giving instruction to young children. But a survey of the market caused him to abandon this idea in despair. Mr. Wall had the best teaching connection in Mellerby—a small one, at that—the crumbs left over being snapped up eagerly by ladies with brass plates on their railings. You may see such in every city, in every town, in every suburb; they are as plentiful as retired army captains in seaside places. Such a lot of clever musicians are there—such a very little for them to do!

As the New Year stole on its way George grew very despondent. He got into the habit of taking long walks by himself and brooding over his bad luck—which was not a good thing for him, for brooding over trouble never yet



HIS EYES WERE BURNING AND THROBBING.

did aught but make it loom the blacker. Far better would it have been for him to have gone into the fields and done some honest hoeing, an occupation possessed of good medicinal qualities; hedging and ditching, too, has its uses, affording, as it does, a fine vent for pent-up feelings.

The country around Mellerby was not of an exhilarating description. It was rather flat, and disfigured with notice-boards offering valuable sites for sale. The beach and the cliffs were always picturesque, but there is, after all, a sameness about beach and cliff

scenery which is apt to pall upon one after a time.

It depressed George to gaze upon the drawn-up bathing-machines, the empty bungalows, the desolate foreshore. So bleak it all seemed after the sunny days of the summer months, when there was always a hearty welcome for him at Munro's bungalow. Now that bungalow was shuttered, locked, and silent. He wondered how Munro was getting on in town—whether he had sold his pictures—whether he ever went to see Molly. He supposed not, as she never mentioned the artist in her letters. If only Munro had been here now, he—George—felt that he would have had one staunch friend to whom he could have opened his heart—one strong staff to lean upon. But Munro was a hundred miles away. Barry had gone home, too, for a short spell. John Thompson, the vicar's son, was spending his Christmas holidays with a school chum. He had no one except Joyce, and she, after all, was only a little girl.

Greatly did George repent having procured his expulsion from Silverdown. He saw now that he had not turned a bold enough face to his difficulties. If he had slogged away at his work, and done his level best at games, he would have come through all right in the end. But—he had to acknowledge it to himself now during his miserable rambles—he had *not* done his level best in either sphere. He had allowed himself to be too easily disheartened; he had given in too soon. He knew—he had known all along—that he had as many brains and as good brains as any other fellow of his age at the school, but he had imagined that the luck was against him, and so he had sulked, and never made the best of his capabilities. Ah! how he wished he could go back and be a boy at school once more! He would not give in so easily again—he would not give in at all. . . .

Mr. Wall, noticing how doleful the lad was, gave him some music-copying to do, promising him a fee for the work out of the choir funds Most of the psalm tunes in vogue were in the psalters used by the choir, but every organist compiles a collection of psalm and hymn tunes which are not in the psalter or hymn-book, and the alto, tenor, and bass of these have to be copied into special books. Mr. Wall had a number of odd tunes, the parts of which had not been copied into these books, so it occurred to him that George would be just the fellow to execute this task.

George accepted the work gladly, and fell to with a zeal that put a stop to his long, lonely prowls over the bare countryside. During that period he had felt too down-in-the-mouth to compose anything on his own account, but now this copying bred a desire in him to inscribe and make fast on paper any little musical ideas that came floating through his brain while he was engaged on Mr. Wall's work. His spirits rose accordingly, and he often laboured long after Joyce had gone to rest—laboured until his eyes seemed like balls of fire in his head. For it was at night, when the curtains were drawn and the lamps lit, that the happiest fancies occurred to him—when all sorts of quaint lilting notions came tumbling over one another in his imagination. There was a cracked old piano in the farmhouse drawing-room, and though the discordant twanging of the instrument made the young musician clench his teeth, yet, because there was no better piano, he played his little fancies over on this one, Joyce listening approvingly, except when a more excruciating twang than usual made her wince and put her fingers in her ears.

But this period of congenial occupation was not—alas!—destined to be of long continuance. The trouble in George's eyes, which had bothered him at school and followed him in an aggravated form to the solicitor's office—where it attracted the observant managing clerk's notice—had been gathering in volume. These regiments of notes, in unrelieved black, had worried the poor eyes until George could bear the pain no longer.

One evening, when Joyce and he were writing at the table of their little sitting-room, the boy threw his music-copying aside and rose from his chair. His eyes were burning and throbbing; he could not for his life copy another note. Joyce, busily employed on a letter to Molly, did not look up till her brother spoke. He was looking at her at the time, as it seemed, through a red mist.

"Joyce," he said, "what do spectacles cost?"

"Why, Georgie?"

"Because I think I ought to get some. My eyes are giving me beans."

Joyce preserved a perfectly calm demeanour as she rose from her seat and joined her brother.

"Let me see them, Georgie. . . . Yes, they are very red. I will bathe them for you, and in the morning you must go and see Dr. Deadwood."

Joyce fetched some warm water, and with soft, womanly little hands bathed the aching eyes

"That's awfully nice," said George. "But I still see all red with them."

"They will be better in the morning," re-

turned Joyce. "You have been doing too much copying, dear. Perhaps you had better go to bed now, as this light must be bad for them."

"Think I will," said George, moving with uncertain steps towards the door.

George lay awake feeling as if he had two molten globes in his sockets. Ten o'clock struck. Soon after, the bailiff and his wife, who were early people, went to bed. Joyce had gone an hour since. The house was now quite quiet. Eleven struck. Still that shooting, burning sensation in his eyeballs kept slumber at bay.

And what a miserable lying-awake it was! Sometimes sleeplessness has pleasant thoughts for company—recent triumphs, bright prospects; a host of merry people will dance round one's pillow—jovial little gnomes of the night. But the boy had nothing to think about that could give him any satisfaction. All in front of him was drear and forbidding. He had no money, he had no place in the world.

Twelve struck. . . . and the tick-tocking of the tall eight-day clock in the hall sounded extraordinarily loud to his painfully acute hearing. The vigour of a sense that is benumbed generally goes to accelerate one that is hale and hearty. . . . The scamper of mice under the ancient flooring seemed like the hurried footsteps of men. Every creak of the old timbers was audible . . . all the night-sounds of the old house reached his couch.

A single solemn note proclaimed the hour of one. Drowsiness was creeping over him now. There was still a sharp throbbing in his eyes, but it was less insistent. The pillow felt soft and the bed warm. He was very tired, so he turned on his left side, and soon ceased to hear anything.

Joyce got up at half-past seven, and when she was dressed she went to George's room and drew up his blind. A sudden exclamation from her brother caused her to hasten to his bedside. She found him holding his hands to his eyes.

"Let it down—let it down!" he said, hoarsely. "I can't bear the light. . . . It's awful."

She ran, her heart beating fast, and darkened the room again. Then she hastened back to him.

"Do your eyes hurt you very much, Georgie?"

"Frightfully. . . . I daren't look at you. . . . Joyce—do you think—I am going blind?"

And turning his face to the pillow, the lad burst into an agony of tears.

(To be continued.)

BLEAK JANUARY.

SCHOOL MAGAZINES.

"Hæc olim meminisse juvabit."

Brighton College Magazine.—A Brighton bard has some trenchant "Views on Things in General." His opinion of the cricketer-journalist who was so much in evidence last summer will be shared by a good many. "Sammy," of Somerset, falls under his lash in the following verse :—

> When Samuel Woods, the journalist,
> Encased in thirsty blotting-pads,
> Records with unaccustomed fist
> The chequered fortunes of his lads,
> I do not care for it, do you?
> I'd sooner see him make a few.

An exceptionally interesting feature of the number before us is the series of extracts from the letters to his mother of an O.B. serving with the Tibet Expedition. Here is the writer's account of a football match played on a pitch strewn with huge boulders, and encumbered with a deep morass : –

I picked up two sides, consisting of Sepoys, Bhutias, Babus, coolies in all sorts of kits a great many without boots. Except the Babus and coolies, they have no fear at all. It was a marvel no one was hurt. Scarcely any of them knew the game, but they went at one another, head down, hacking and kicking for all they were worth. Only one man, a Sepoy, who was playing with bare feet, met with a real injury—he broke a toe! All the Bhutias turned out and watched with great interest and roars of laughter. The Babus and coolies, who funked like anything, came in for a lot of derision from the Bhutias. They were also intensely amused when, running up the field with the ball, I suddenly sank in the mud up to my waist. I stuck fast, and could not move till I was hauled out by two Sepoys.

Verily, a remarkable man is the British officer. Small wonder that he has no equal as a leader of men!

The Cadet (School Ship *Conway*).—Another photograph appears in the very interesting series of pictures of ships commanded by old cadets of the *Conway*. This is the curious-looking craft, *Valiant*, a stern-wheeler of the Southern Nigeria Marine, i.e., the Marine Department of the Government of Southern Nigeria, which is under the Colonial Office and in no way connected with the Niger Company. Another photograph depicts the two white officers of the *Valiant* and their trim and sturdy black crew. The most interesting feature of the issue, however, is the reprint of the correspondence in the *Times* on "The Making of British Mercantile Marine Officers," which was opened at the end of last September by Captain Broadbent, Commander of the *Conway*. No one will deny the vital importance to the British Empire of the Mercantile Marine, yet—for reasons into which we have no space here to enter—not a few are the obstacles which beset the early career of the Mercantile Marine officer. Captain Broadbent's letter seeks to suggest an amendment to the present inadequate arrangements for the training of the mercantile cadet. His plea is for sea-going training ships to continue the good work done on the stationary vessels.

No need for an elaborately-fitted training-ship; any ordinary sailing-vessel fitted with accommodation for twenty, thirty, up to sixty cadets would amply meet the requirements. The ships would go about their ordinary business, trading up and down the world where freights are best or most convenient. Charge a moderate premium and as, after the ships are once started, the Cadets would form an ample and excellent crew, dividends would be helped rather than hindered. The stationary ships have their use and cannot be dispensed with. What is wanted is something to replace and improve upon the rapidly disappearing privately owned sailing-vessel, something in which our youth can learn and practise daily presence of mind in the face of sudden danger, power of resource, control of men, judgment, and cool daring, can learn, in fact, to become seamen and maintain untarnished the credit of their cloth.

An important letter is reprinted, among others, from Messrs. Devitt and Moore, a firm of ship-owners, who have for many years had training vessels of this description working with complete success. What is wanted is that more should follow their example.

Granthamian.—A contributor gives some "Impressions of Greece," gathered during a recent tour in that country. Naturally enough, the contrasts between modern and ancient Greece are what strike him most forcibly. Those who have never seen a modern Greek newspaper may be entertained by the following passage :—

Greek newspapers are amusing, especially as regards the English news for instance, the reports of the Boer War. Let me quote from newspaper cuttings which lie before me.—*ὁ Λορδος Κιτσενερ τηλεγραφει σημερον οτι ο στρατηγος Βαβιγτον συνεκλεισε* (= was engaged) *μετα ἰσχυροτατου σωματος Μπουερ* (= Boers). "*Ο Δουξ και ἡ Δουκισσα του Κορνουαλ ἀφιχθησαν χθες εἰς Μαλταν* (the Duke and Duchess of Cornwall) arrived yesterday at Malta). English statesmen appeared in splendid form, *e.g.*, *ὁ Λορδος Σωλσβερυ*; *Κυριος Τσαμβερλαιν*; and Sir M Hicks-Beach became *Χιξ Μπιτζ*!

The shop notices included *ποδηλάσιον* (a bicycle); *σιγαρέτα* (cigarettes); and—most horrible of all—*πνευματα*, for Spirits (to drink). I have heard of a *Καφφεῖον* (café) which had on its window ΙΑΙΦ, meaning "High Life!"

Haileyburian.—A recent number was given over largely to memorial notices of the late Charles Wellington Furse, A.R.A. whose early death has left English Art so much the poorer. From the *Haileyburian's* valued correspondent, "Praeteritus," we take a brief passage not a little suggestive of the affection which Furse retained for Haileybury, and the esteem in which the school held her distinguished *alumnus* :—

Some of us may remember the surreptitious horses and dogs which used to be confiscated in preparation or in form; at a later time he came down and gave a delightfully characteristic paper at the "Art Section" of the Antiquarian Society, on another occasion he gave a handsome contribution towards the pictures in the Bradby Hall, the last visit he paid to Haileybury was when there was a meeting of the War Memorial Committee, and he indicated the decorations of the Obelisk on the temporary wooden model by a few dexterous brushfuls of green paint. All who knew him will bear testimony to his wit: his enthusiasm for everything that was really "big," as he loved to call it, in art or letters, and to his generosity. Like his father, he was devoted to horses and to all forms of sport.

Hurst Johnian.—"R. J. W." discusses the

question, "Can Birds Talk?" answering it himself in the affirmative. We do not feel convinced, however, by his argument that only by receiving oral instruction from its parents can the young swallow (which is the first to leave our shores when the autumn comes) learn its route to warmer climes. What about instinct—that mysterious function of the brain so nearly akin to reason, yet so entirely distinct? Insects, for example, which know no maternal care, perform acts not a whit less marvellous than the first migration of the young swallow, which it is impossible they should ever have been *taught* to do. A very interesting review appears of a book —"God and Our Soldiers"—by an O.J. who served as a chaplain in the South African campaign. Of the many notable passages which the reviewer quotes from what would seem to be a particularly fascinating book, one in particular strikes us as singularly instructive. It is well to know—and we cannot but agree in our hearts that the author is right in his estimate—what our true national characteristics are:—

The mules are bright, intelligent animals, strong and wiry, with long nose and ears, and a tail which begins well, but frays out badly at the end. Each one is an incarnate contradiction. As soon as he has watered himself he has a good roll over and over in the sand or grass then he cocks his long ears, thinks for a moment where he is least wanted, and trots off to go there at once. They were dear to me, as they reminded me of our north-countrymen at home, strong, very hard working, stubborn, thoughtful, obstinate, self willed, long suffering and invaluable. The mule would represent the British race far better than the lion

Johnian (St. John's School, Leatherhead).—The Pacific coast of North and South America holds many places, little known and seldom visited, of rare fascination. The very names fire the imagination: Guatemala, Panama, Callao, Lima, Valparaiso, Coquimba! An O. J. contributes some notes on his experiences during a four-and-a-half months' cruise in this part of the world. At Panama he went to see the famous canal:

The sight seen is wonderful; sometimes huge masses of solid rock cut through and thrown high up to form banks then swamps and marshes cleared and banked. All along the route, where the work is practically at a standstill, owing to want of funds, millions of pounds lay idle in unused machinery overgrown with creepers, rotting and rusting away by the side, but to me the worst thing appeared to be the climate, for, along the railway, hundreds of graves tell the tale of the awful rage of the Yellow Fever, brought on by the swampy marshes and trying climate. The revolutions, too, have not been beneficial; nearly every other man you meet in Panama has a wooden leg, or an eye or an arm missing.

Irish Blue (King's Hospital, Dublin).—The principal contribution is "The Story of King's Hospital," an interesting history of the Irish Blue Coat School. Brother Blues at Horsham may like to read the following extract:—

The King's Hospital is the oldest Public School Foundation in Ireland, and the only one of directly royal origin. Founded by the King shortly after his restoration, when the great Duke of Ormonde was Viceroy, by a Royal Charter from Whitehall to the Lord Mayor and Aldermen of Dublin, it was opened in 1675 with room for 300 inmates, as the first intention was that it should be what is primarily meant by the word "Hospitium," whilst serving as a Free School on the model, as expressed in the Charter, of Christ's Hospital in London. The low condition of the Irish Exchequer and of the Civic Purse, however, compelled its adoption of the second purpose only, and it has been known ever since, like Christ's Hospital, as the Blue Coat School.

Ousel (Bedford Grammar School).—A recent number contains a couple of clever stanzas addressed "Ad Pontifices" (Pontifex being, we imagine, a free translation of "bridge-player," or "bridge-ite"), somewhat eruditely hitting off the niceties of the modern craze—Bridge.

Sexey's School Magazine.—W. A K. had the luck recently to spend a summer holiday in Spitzbergen, but we doubt whether he deserved his good fortune. He has, we fear, the makings of that distressing person, the globe-trotter, in him. Spitzbergen! The sound of it seems to waft a breath of keen, cold air into one's heated study! The room vanishes, and the eye roams free across the limitless plains of snow and ice, where the midnight sun shines in the heavens, and the silence of vast open spaces lays its magic spell upon the soul. Yet thus it is that W. A. K. begins:—

It is possible to visit Spitzbergen with comparative ease, and surrounded by the luxury and comfort of the best London hotel

Later on, speaking of his encounter with some of the crew of a whaler, he remarks:—

I declined a visit to the whaler to see (and smell) the operation of boiling down the blubber.

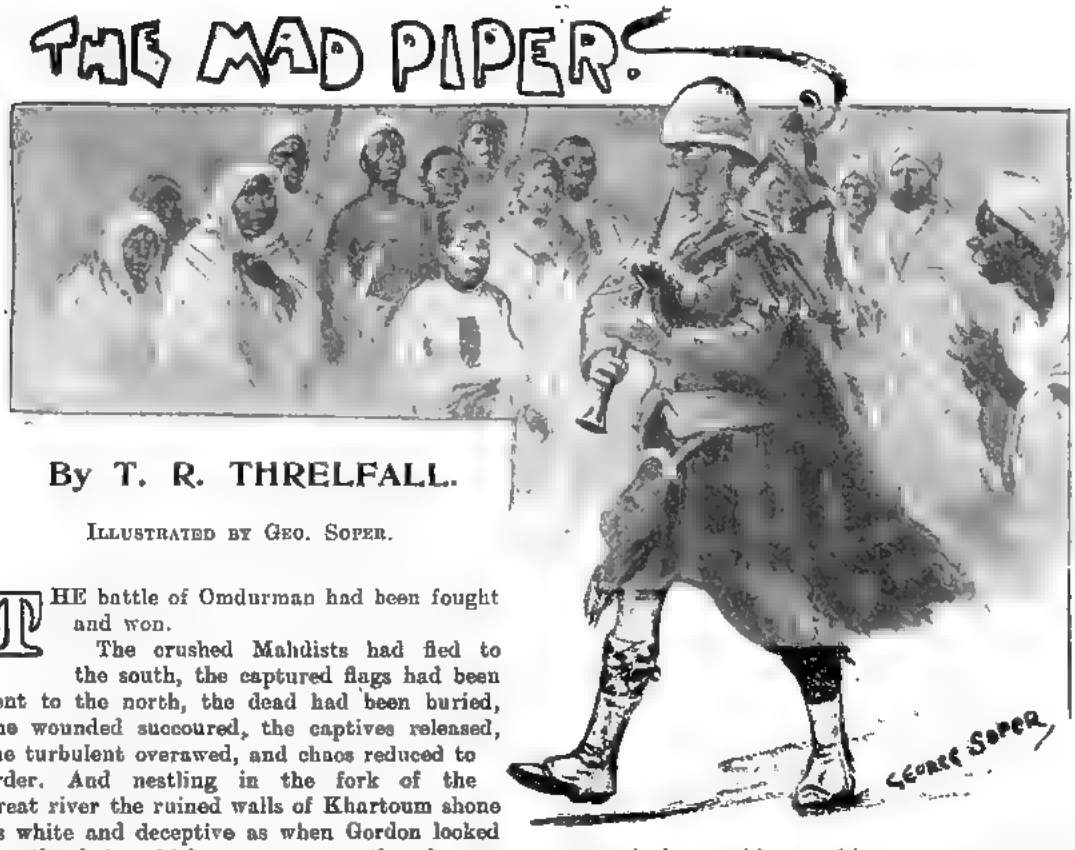
So W. A. K., having eyes (we presume), but no desire to use them, says goodbye to the two Norwegians and the "old Finn dressed in reindeer-skin," and takes his delicate nose back to his steamer-hotel. Probably he feared to be late for dinner! Next summer we would suggest that he tries Margate. Much more lively than Spitzbergen.

A new school magazine has made its appearance since our last reviews appeared. This is the *Blew House Magazine*, to which we offer a hearty welcome. The *Alperton Hall Magazine*, in future, will be known as the *Norman Court Magazine*.

Also received, at the date of writing, *Birkonian*, *Cranleighan*, *Droghedean*, *Durban High School Magazine*, *Harrovian*, *Ipswich School Magazine*, *Lorettonian*, *Mercers' School Magazine*, *Plymothian*, *Quernmorian*, *Sea Point Magazine*, and *The Isis*.

A. E. JOHNSON.

THE MAD PIPER.



By T. R. THRELFALL.

ILLUSTRATED BY GEO. SOPER.

THE battle of Omdurman had been fought and won.

The crushed Mahdists had fled to the south, the captured flags had been sent to the north, the dead had been buried, the wounded succoured, the captives released, the turbulent overawed, and chaos reduced to order. And nestling in the fork of the great river the ruined walls of Khartoum shone as white and deceptive as when Gordon looked for the help which never came, though perchance with the clear vision of those on the threshold of the grave he saw beyond the vista of years when savagery would be driven into the dark interior, and the British flag would once more wave over this outpost of civilisation. Vengeance, indeed, had fallen at last, and the curse of Africa had been dealt its first staggering blow.

The iron discipline having been for the moment relaxed, wondering British soldiers rambled amid the wattle huts, the mud mosques and the grass tents which formed the new Mahdist capital. With rare exceptions they were sober, well-behaved and watchful, as they had every reason to be, for bloodthirsty fanatics scowled at them from amid forbidding shadows and seductive retreats, and asked nothing better than to ensure themselves an immediate passport to paradise by driving a knife into an unbeliever's heart.

Amongst the few, however, who had been indulging too freely in the convivial cup were a couple of strangely dissimilar soldiers. One was a stalwart, blue-eyed, heavy-jawed Highland piper. His adored pipes were tucked under his arm, one end of his plaid was spread aggressively over his arm, his sporran was awry, his helmet was tilted to the back of his head, his gaiters were splashed and his buttons were tarnished, while a broad ribbon of the Macdonald tartan was trebly bunched under his chin. His companion, however, was under the middle height, but stiffly built and muscular. He had red hair and a ruddy complexion, steel grey eyes, uptilted nose, a big mouth, protruding lips, and a general expression of reckless good humour and sterling comradeship. Who, indeed, could look twice at him or at the number on his facings without recognising the irrepressible Irish soldier—a veritable whirlwind in battle and a glutton for pleasure!

Both were noisily jovial, but that unfailing good fortune which ever attends the tipsy guided their footsteps unmolested, until they found themselves by the side of the river. Sitting heavily down amid the yellow grass they gazed for some time at the glimmering, noiseless water. Presently the Irishman turned to his companion to find that the latter was asleep. So he gave a contented grunt, spread-eagled himself on the ground, and joined his friend in the land of nod.

The Eastern night had fallen when Mickey awoke. Where was he? and he looked at the heavens, but that gave him no information. Then he stretched his arm and encountered the Highlander's form and his inseparable pipes. Yes, it was indeed Sandy, and he was alive sure enough, for no dead man ever snored like that. He next tried to think, but that was difficult, for Mickey indulged in few luxuries, and thinking was one of them. Presently, however, his senses became more alert, and he raised his aching and bemuddled head to look around. But that only added to his perplexity. What did it all mean? Where was he?

Ah, he remembered now. He and Sandy had fallen asleep on the river bank. But he wasn't in the grass now. No, indeed. He was moving. He blinked up and made out a sail bent like a slack bow, looked forward and observed a white-robed figure standing motionless, glanced behind and perceived another apparently at the helm, sat up and gazed at the innumerable stars reflected in the flowing water, listened and heard the croak of a belated stork, rapped the object whereon he sat, and, when it gave back a hollow sound, prayed with more fervour than he had done since Father M'Grath crounced him for his love-making and rioting. Then, with an invocation to his patron saint, he gripped the tunic of his slumbering companion and shook him vigorously, meanwhile saying :—

"Wake up, Sandy, darlin'. Sure, an' we're done for. We're on the road to down below, an' there's no half-way house till the end. Ochone, an' what did I lave ould Oireland for? It's just what me ould mother said I'd come to if I mixed wid the haythen "

These lamentations thoroughly roused Sandy.

After sitting up and looking round with blinking eyes he responded forcibly :

"Waur are we, ye blitherin' bubblejock? Dinna ye ken? Why, we hae baith been made preesoners by tha rascal Arabs. They've taen us on shipboard, an' I've nae doot we sal be roasted an eaten wi'oot gracie."

Mickey groaned and edged up to his comrade.

"Roasted an' aten, Sandy? Och, murther, but we'll not agree wid thim. Tell them, Sandy, darlin', that we've had the meazles, an' the scarlet faver, an' small-pox, an' everythin' else that has a bad name, an' that'll taste bad to spell."

"I ken we must bide a wee. We'll tak' no harrm by speerin' roond."

"Och, acushla, acushla, an' to think that Mickey O'Dowd, the delight ov the swate craythers an' the proide ov the regimint, should be roasted an' fried an' sarved up in stamin' collaps to haythin savadges. But bad cess to thim, I'll disagree wid thim. I'll turn in me grave an' guv 'em all the noightmare."

But Sandy gave no heed to his companion's sighs. He was looking carefully round and fingering his pipes as though they gave him courage and hope

With the sunrise animated nature awoke with a start. Yes. They were on board an Arab diabeeah manned by a dozen fierce-looking slave-dealers. From the murderous glances they cast at the prisoners, and the manner in which they gripped their knives, it was evident that they longed to give the unbelievers the happy despatch, but were restrained by some powerful motive.

Presently the leader, a tall, ferocious-looking Arab, with an ominously stained yataghan gleaming in his camel-hair belt, approached and stood looking down at them with a sardonic expression on his ugly face. Then he addressed them in Arabic, but as they did not know a word of that language they could only grasp his meaning from his fierce looks, menacing gestures, and threatening voice.

There could be no mistake as to the fate reserved for them. Death by torture—vindictive, prolonged, and fiendish—was assuredly their lot.

Despite their gloomy outlook, however, they assumed that attitude of contempt and indifference which is so exasperating to savage natures; in fact, Mickey even smiled, a proceeding which so provoked the captain that he gripped his yataghan to cut them down, when a cry from the man at the prow diverted his attention, and made him hurry forward. Shading his eyes, he gazed intently up the river for some time. Then he turned and gave an order to his men, who immediately threw themselves on the prisoners, and after a desperate struggle, effectually bound and gagged them. The unfortunate soldiers were then thrown into the bottom of the boat and covered with loose doura grass.

A few minutes later the captives heard the panting of a steam launch, followed by a hail to the diabeeah to heave to. Then came an English voice instructing an interpreter to ask the captain if he carried any slaves and what was his cargo. The chatter of the boatmen having been translated, the patrolling captain expressed himself satisfied.

"Yes I can see there's neither cargo nor slaves, so there can't be anything wrong. Still, such beggars want watching, for they're as slippery as eels. Cast off there," and

A FEROCIOUS LOOKING ARAB STOOD LOOKING AT THEM.

the next moment the launch had resumed its puffing.

Although the two soldiers had strained every nerve to make their presence known to their compatriots, they were too securely bound, and the noise made by the Arabs was too great to allow of that. They were, indeed, still panting from their exertions when they were roughly hauled before the captain and treated afresh to kicks and gibes. At length, however, they were securely shackled to a couple of iron rings and their gags removed, after which a plentiful supply of doura cakes and water was placed before them. After doing justice to the meal, Mickey observed :—

"Be Jabez, Sandy, an' a point ov whiskey would mend the wather. It's loike Paddy Mooney's milk, too wake to stand ov its own accourd."

Sandy's response was a grunt. The fact of his being chained like a trapped lion galled him.

During that day and the following night the poor fellows suffered severely, but with soldierly stoicism they would not add to the delights of their captors by word or look. Presently the obvious exasperation of the Arab leader reached such a pitch that when Mickey laughed the savage spat in his face, whereupon the irrepressible Irishman retorted,

"Arrah, now, ye pig-swillin', cross-eyed son ov a monkey. Yis wouldn't do that an' Mickey O'Dowd has his hands at liberty. Ye'd be atin' yer teeth for to-morrow's dinner an' washin' yer dhirty silf in the river. Go 'long wid yiz for an ugly sarpint. Why, Mick Maloney's pigs wouldn't bemane thimselves to sleep in the same gutter wid yiz."

Immediately after sunrise on the second day a cry from the look-out caused the crew to rush to the front of the boat and commence to shout and gesticulate. These evidences of delight were responded to by the firing of guns and the beating of drums by a crowd of natives on the near bank of the river, and also by the launching of a few primitive canoes.

When within earshot the news that a couple of the hated white soldiers were prisoners on the diabeeah brought a crowd to the water's edge, where they expressed their sentiments by the shaking of spears and yelling in a highly pitched blood-curdling manner.

"By Sint Pathrick, but they're swate craythers," said Mickey, "and they're out for a day's diversion, an' no mistake. Sure, Sandy, an' I'd just loike to have tin minutes wid them an' a shillelah. I'd tache them how to cilibrate a wake an' to wink wid the left oye."

Drawing himself up to his full height and gripping his hand savagely, Sandy responded :

"Ma certes, an' I'd gie a few bawbees just ta be free wi' me claymore for a bit whiles. I'd show them that Sandy MacAllister is na chiel."

It required all the efforts of the crew and several dervishes to save the prisoners from being torn to pieces as they were led through

the encampment. Twice the fanatical crowd nearly overpowered the escort, and some stout whacks had to be given before the assailants would fall back a little. Despite the danger, however, Mickey really seemed to enjoy the disturbance, for he grinned and shouted:—

"Wurroo, me darlin's; kape it up. It's nearly as foine as Ballyhooley fair."

Tumbled into a dirty hut in the centre of the encampment with a stalwart and inquisitive Arab on guard at the door, the comrades were for the moment free to compare notes. It was pretty evident that they were not to be starved, for an old black slave presently entered with a calabash of water and some dourra bread. Their immediate wants relieved, they discussed their prospects, but without seeing the slightest ray of hope. Having thoroughly boxed the compass, Mickey wound up by saying:—

"Well, never moind, me bhoy. Niver say die till ye're dead. Many's the slip atween the cup an' the lip, so we'll just kape our wither oye open an' wate for the divarsion. These haythin do quare things betimes."

"Eh, Mickey, maybe ye're richt. But we'll just hae a bit skirl an' show them hoo a Heelan' laddie nae fears them ava," and Sandy hugged his pipes affectionately.

Rising, he began that elaborate setting without which no piper from the days of Tubal Cain ever attempted to soothe the savage breast, and, in spite of his awkward leg chains, he commenced to march to and fro with all the swing and pomp of a true piper. These preparations passed unheeded by the sentinel, but when the weird skirl rang out he stood for some moments as though petrified. Then he gave a terrified yell and rushed like a madman into the open air, where he continued shouting something in Arabic. This, of course, brought the inevitable crowd, whose changed temper was shown by a reverential attitude and many exclamations of wonder.

All this naturally provided the quick-witted Mickey with food for reflection. If such amazing results could be obtained by means of Scotia's pipes, what indeed might not be done if Ireland joined in with whoop and jig? Giving no time, therefore, for second thoughts, he gave a screech worthy of a river steamer, and began to leap wildly about. He redoubled his efforts when he saw a number of marvelling dervishes gather in the doorway and apparently compare notes in an excited undertone.

Presently a white-bearded elder impressively addressed his companions. That seemed to resolve their doubts, for they raised their hands and, turning to the north-east, uttered a number of solemn sentences. Then they turned to explain matters to the people, whereupon the cries of wonder and devotion increased. Encouraged by this pronounced success, Mickey whooped and leaped more wildly than ever.

"Kape it up, Sandy, me bhoy. Bedad, an' the spalpeens think we're mad, an' mad we'll be, sure enough. Screech away, an' I'll tickle their ears wid a Connemara whisper. Whoop!"

Sandy promptly responded with a louder skirl of the pipes, and a few steps of the sword dance

Presently they secured a welcome pause through the old dervish entering and making a reverential bow, which was the prelude to the introduction of a couple of smiths, who struck their shackles off. Then he stood on one side of the doorway, and by eloquent sweeps of his arms invited them to step outside.

"Arrah now, me darlin'," cried Mickey; "ould tow head wants us to lade the procission, so come along, me bhoy, an' we'll show them a foine civilised lunatic asylum. Och ohne, an' we're the trate ov the fair," and stepping into the open he gave a yell, and, leaping into the air, cracked his heels together in the most approved Donnybrook style, while Sandy stalked proudly forward playing "The Cock of the North."

As they passed through this superstitious, reverential throng Mickey espied a warrior attired in one of the chain mail suits which had belonged to his ancestors since the day when it had been taken from a dead Crusader long centuries ago. Determined to give still more convincing proofs of his madness, the yelling Irishman threw himself on the shrinking warrior, wrenched the headpiece from him ere he realised the object of the attack, and donned it himself. Under any other circumstances the dervish soldier would have died a thousand deaths rather than surrender his most treasured possession, but his assailant was a person to be revered, so he bowed his head in submission.

Thrice the noisy couple traversed the encampment amid increasing signs of wonder and veneration. Still, a Highland piper cannot blow, or a frolicsome Irishman dance, for ever, so Mickey resorted once more to his ready wits for relief. He found it by performing one of his most successful schoolboy feats. In other words, he stood on his head and worked his legs energetically to and fro. To the Arabs that was indeed conclusive evidence of madness. It was new to them and therefore terrible. Was not a man who could turn himself upside down as bad as the man who could turn himself inside out? Such of them

MICKEY'S CAKE-WALK WAS CERTAINLY AN AMAZING SUCCESS.

as had made a pilgrimage to Mecca had never seen a dancing dervish do anything like it. Everybody was therefore prepared to accord that respect and reverence which Mohammedans everywhere show to the insane, and they vied with each other in seeking their honoured prisoners' goodwill.

"Begorra, Sandy, stroike up somethin' loively an' I'll make the spalpeens dance," Mickey panted, as he paused to take breath.

With ready compliance the piper produced such a lively quick step as seemed to bewitch the people, for even the hoary elders began to bob about like stiff automata, while the women gathered round Mickey in frantic admiration.

"Arrah, me darlin's, an' we'll try the coon dance," laughed the merry Master of Ceremonies. "It'll be a plisant divarsion, an' will make the ould bald-headed duffers walk round smartly. So pipe up, me bhoy, an' we'll show them a bit ov Ballyhooley."

Mickey's cake-walk was certainly an amazing success, the more so that it was entirely new to every member of the community, and also because they regarded it as some kind of religious performance. As Mickey danced it with vigour and gave certain variations of his own, they watched him closely and, being naturally clever mimics, soon made very fair attempts at it, but with such solemnity and veneration as made the waggish Hibernian writhe with laughter, and caused Sandy's pipes to emit some amazing screeches.

They were dancing their way back to their prison again when their attendant elder drew

them towards the largest hut in the encampment, and intimated by signs that they were to occupy it. Gleefully throwing themselves on the camel-skin rugs, they were still resting when a couple of women entered with calabashes containing food and water. Having placed these in the middle of the floor they made obeisance and departed

One of the larger vessels contained a savoury stew, but as spoons and forks found no place amid this primitive company our friends had perforce to fall back on their fingers.

Mickey, having fished out a juicy joint of what appeared to be young kid, smacked his lips over it, and then observed :—

"Sure, Sandy, this is bethor than being kilt dead entoirely. We've lashins ov food, nary a bit ov drill, no sentry-go, and a big hut to play blind man's buff in. Bedad, we only nade a drop ov the crather to make us as happy as pigs in clover."

Giving a sigh of content like the snort of a traction engine, Sandy observed :—

"Ma certes, mon, but we micht be waur. It's aye a fine fat living for a bit skirl an' a wee daunce. Man, it wad just be pairfect wi' a smoke an' a laitle whusky. But mabe that wull drap fra the cluds like this guid food, so we maun just a' be thankfu'. An' I'm thinkin' that a bit sleep wull nae come amiss, but wull mak' us a' the blither for the morn." And, placing his pipes under his head, he gave a sigh of content and proceeded straightway to dreamland.

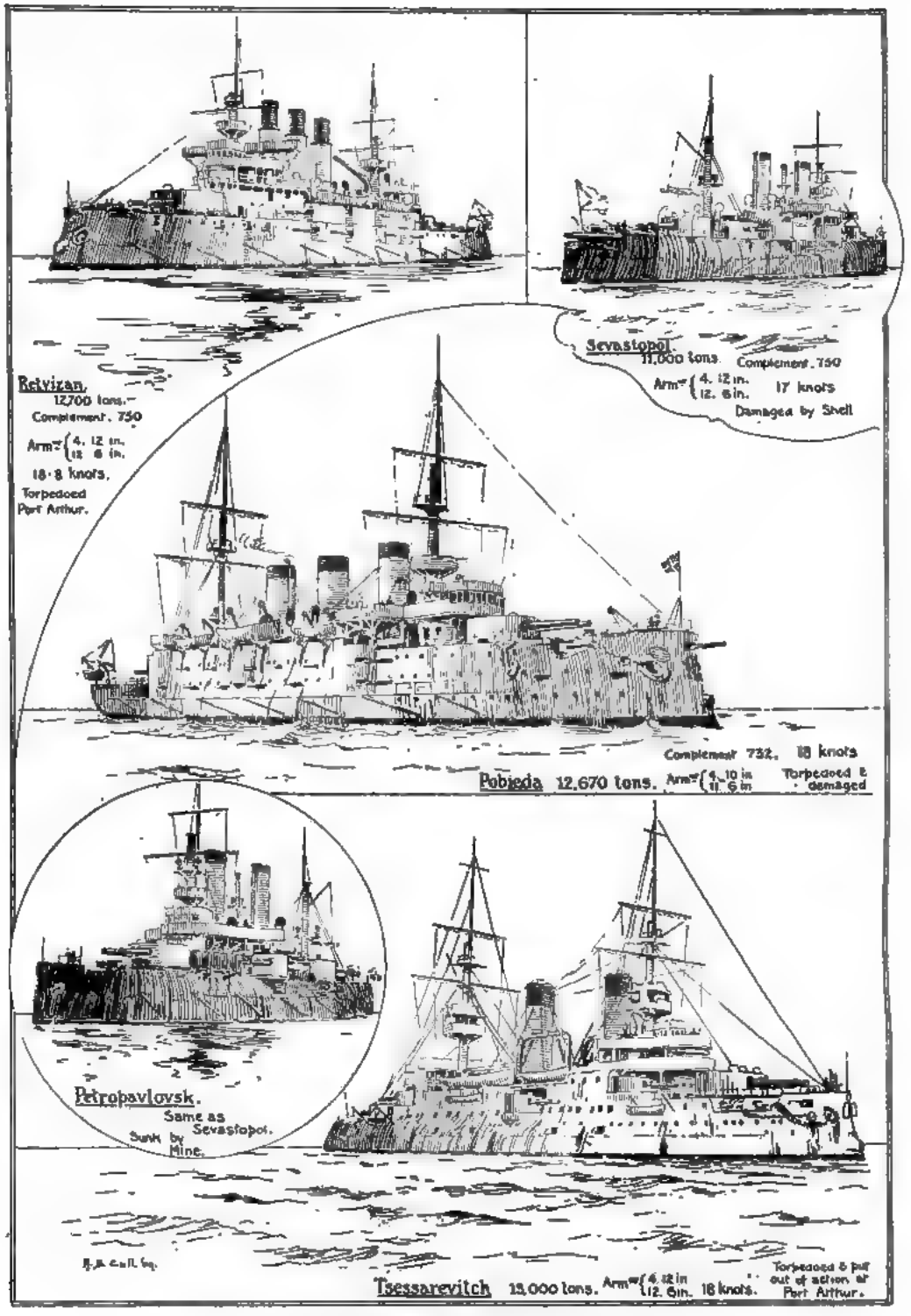
Mickey seated himself on an upturned calabash and chuckled merrily for some time. Presently he smacked his thigh, laughed as a man will who remembers a forgotten joke, and then pointed his reflections with an all-embracing wink. As he curled himself up on the floor he grunted :—

"Bedad, an' it's a foine counthry, so I'll be the king ov it, an' Sandy shall be my chief organ-blower."

[*We hope to publish further adventures of Sandy and Mickey.*—Ed. Captain.]

A Natural Protest.

The Snowball : "Here, young man, who are you a-shoving of?"



RUSSIAN BATTLESHIPS IN THE FAR EAST.
Specially drawn for THE CAPTAIN by A. B. Cull.

COMPETITIONS FOR JANUARY.

Last day for sending in, January 18th.

(Foreign and Colonial Readers, February 18th.)

NOTICE.—At the top of the first page the following particulars must be clearly written, thus :—

Competition No. ——, Class ——, Name ——,
Address ——, Age ——.

Letters to the Editor should not be sent with competitions.

We trust to your honour to send in unaided work.

GIRLS may compete, and in the event of their proving successful in competitions where cricket-bats, &c., are offered as prizes, will be allowed to select other articles of similar value.

Pages should be connected with paper-fasteners ; not pins.

Write only on one side of the paper

You may send as many "tries" for each competition as you like, but each "try" must be sent in a separately stamped envelope.

Owing to the frequency with which certain names have appeared in the Lists of Prize-Winners, we have decided to make a rule to the effect that a Competitor may not win more than one first prize and one consolation prize per month.

Address envelopes and postcards as follows :—Competition No. ——, Class ——, THE CAPTAIN, 12 Burleigh Street, Strand, London.

All competitions should reach us by January 18th.

The Results will be published in March.

AGE RULE : A Competitor may enter for (say) an age limit 21 competition, so long as he has not actually turned 22. The same rule applies to the other age limits.

In every case the Editor's decision is final, and he cannot enter into correspondence with unsuccessful competitors.

No. 1.—"A January Event."—Write an essay, not exceeding 400 words in length, on any great event that has happened in the month of January. Neat handwriting, punctuation, and good spelling will be taken into consideration. Prizes : Class I., a "Swan" Fountain Pen ; Classes II. and III., a "Gamage" Football. (See Prizes page.)

Class I.	... ...	Age limit : Twenty-one.
Class II.	... ...	Age limit : Sixteen.
Class III.	... ...	Age limit : Twelve.

No. 2.—"'Captain' Birthday Book." This time take the month of *May* (thirty-one days), and supply a suitable quotation for each day You may obtain your quotations, poetical or prose, humorous or serious, from any source you please. Make them as varied as possible, and bear in mind the season May falls in. Remember that you are put on your honour not to copy anything out of other birthday books. Do not neglect "THE CAPTAIN" when making your choice. Prizes : Class I., a New Columbia Graphophone ; Classes II. and III., a Set of Sandow Grip Dumb-Bells. (See Prizes page.)

Class I.	... ...	No age limit.
Class II.	... ...	Age limit : Twenty-one.
Class III.	... ..	Age limit : Sixteen.

No. 3.—"Queer Christian Names."—Send on a postcard a list of the Twelve Queerest Christian Names you have ever heard. Do not include family names which have been tacked on to surnames, such as, for instance, *Baden*-Powell, *Ll yd*-George, etc. Prizes : Two "John Piggott" Hockey Sticks will be awarded in each Class. (See Prizes page.)

Class I.	... ...	No Age limit :
Class II.	... ...	Age limit : Twenty-one.
Class III.	... ...	Age limit : Sixteen.

No. 4.—"Photographic Competition."—Send a print from your best negative. Photographs must be original, i.e., not copied from the work of others. Neatness in mounting will be taken into consideration. Prizes : Two "Sunny Memories" Albums in each Class. (See Prizes page.)

Class I.	... ...	No age limit.
Class II.	... ...	Age limit : Twenty one.
Class III.	... ..	Age limit : Sixteen.

No. 5.—"Hidden Advertisers."—On one of our advertisement pages you will find twelve pictures. Each picture is intended to describe the name of a well-known advertiser or advertising firm. Write the name under each picture, fill in your name, age, class, and address, tear out the page, and post to us. Prizes : Class I., a "De Luxe" Crown Combination Game Board, value £1 ; Classes II. and III., Handsome Books, two in each Class. (See Prizes page.)

Classes and age limits as in No. 1.

No. 6.—"A Song of a Sailor."—One Guinea will be paid to the "CAPTAIN" poet who sends in the best song dealing with a sailor's life. The words should be specially adapted for setting to music. Do not write more than three verses, and take care to supply a swinging chorus, which should be the same for each verse. The best words (if sufficiently good) will be published, and a prize will then be offered for a musical setting.

No Age Limit.

FOREIGN and COLONIAL READERS are invited to compete. In their case the time limit is extended to ***February 18th*** By "Foreign and Colonial" we refer to readers living ***outside*** Europe. There will be ***no age limit.*** One prize of 5s. will be awarded to the sender of the best entry in each Competition. Envelopes should be marked : "Foreign and Colonial January Competitions."

12 BURLEIGH STREET, STRAND, LONDON.

Personally I am starting the CAPTAIN's New Year, as I promised, by tackling my arrears of correspondence. The letters stand in a truly fearsome pile before me, but there's nothing like grasping one's nettle and getting to work. Therefore, besides wishing you all a very Happy and Prosperous New Year—to the footballers, many goals; to the cricketers, heaps of runs; to the young poets, editorial smiles; to the reading man, many prizes!—let me tender you this little piece of advice:—When you've got to do a thing, do it. Don't put it off. Once you've started on your job, you'll soon warm up to it; very soon you'll begin to like it, and by the time some confounded bell calls you away, you won't want to go. When I was at school I used to sit down to prep. feeling that lessons were a bore, and that, as Mr. Arthur Stanley might poetically put it, I'd like to be a little Jap or Esquimaux, and frolic in the sun or on the snow, as the case might be. But the thought of detention and my form-master's frowns soon set me going, and by the time the chapel bell began to toll for evensong I was feeling that I could work on for hours longer. And that is exactly how I feel now, once I "get going." So any of you who find it "hard to begin" should store up in your minds an epigram once uttered by a man of much sound sense: "*Effort brings inspiration.*"

Those of us who are really human strong and weak by turns, seldom love work. But we have to work—I am sorry for the man or boy who hasn't got to—and so the best thing to do is to shake off one's indolent feelings, sit down squarely to one's work, and fall to like a man. A little word, that, with a great meaning. There are many creatures in human shape going about in male attire who are not real men. They are foppish and affected; they are fond of pretending to be what they are not; they lie to get themselves out of difficulties; they shirk trouble, and prevail upon other people to bear their burdens. But the real man, though he may often make mistakes and stray from the path of rectitude, remains a man all the same. He will battle with his weaknesses, and he will come through all right in the long run—scarred and singed, but still a man. For, to the man who really tries, utter failure is impossible. Once there was an epitaph on a man's tombstone, which ran somewhat as follows:—"*He attempted many things, failed in most, but succeeded in a few.*" Does not your heart go out to that quiet sleeper? Think of him toiling and fighting with the moderate abilities Nature had bestowed upon him. At length his call came, and he went out into the everlasting night. And his friends, good men and true, had that epitaph written above his grave—a far nobler epitaph than the catalogue of virtues one so often sees, for it testified to the fact that he tried, and, though seldom succeeding, went on trying. And so, when he died, he lived in the memories of his friends as one who had done his best—and what more can a man do?

This, therefore, is a worthy New Year thought. You may lament much that you have done in 1904, but here is 1905, crisp and fresh and hope-inspiring. Let us front the future with bright faces and stout hearts. May the New Year bring gladness to those who have known sorrow in the Old,

strength to those who have been weak—new hope and courage to us all!

"The Literary Aspirant." On the top of my letter-pile lies a bulky envelope containing a copy of this amateur magazine, whose only fault, as it appears to me, is that it is too small—and probably that is at present an unavoidable fault. This paper may be obtained from Miss A. Ward, 7 Oxendon-street, Leicester, for the sum of fourpence. I opened it expecting to find crude essays and poems of the kind that make me whistle to the Office Dog. Instead, I am treated to a very well-written and thoughtful collection of essays. Of what I have read I am much struck by "On Writing in General," by Geo. F. Good; and "The Modern Woman Discourseth on 'Love,'" by Isabel Wright. From the former I extract the following, which my young CAPTAIN Club contributors might do well to lay to heart:—

The Art of Writing, like the Universe itself, has the dual aspect of matter and spirit. For the writer the highest possibility is reached when his matter becomes most effectively the vehicle of the spirit of his composition, the idea

It is in this fashioning of matter, this carriage-making, that the beginner usually fails. His ideas may be of the first order, but his words do not embody them, do not make the reader understand and sympathise with the writer's thought. The first step in the right direction is to make the language simple and to point it properly. The whole art of punctuation, so important to both reader and writer, is conveyed in the instruction: "Point your sentence as you think it." If this rule is observed, the writer and reader, for the time being, become one, and enjoy the composition together. Of equal importance is an observance of grammatical rules, the neglect of which is, indeed, fatal. These rules are best mastered by going to the fountain head, and absorbing knowledge and correct diction from those great writers who unconsciously stereotype our language. A well-read man naturally thinks, speaks, and writes correctly, and in these days of free libraries and cheap classics the widest reading is possible to all.

I am also much amused by L. M. Obbard's critique of the last number. Yes, I can heartily recommend this little periodical to all such as aspire to shine brightly—or even twinkle meekly—in the literary firmament.

"Ubique," commenting on our "Curious Surnames" Competition, says that it is surprising to note how many common words there are which only require a capital for their initial letter to turn them into surnames. Says he: "You find nouns, adverbs, adjectives, participles, verbs, and even other parts of speech. Why, you could make an ordinary sentence out of proper names only, almost." My correspondent then adds a list of "ordinary words" that form the names of people, as follows:—

North, South, East, West; Quack, Duck; Lye, Facer, Story, Phibbs; Ing, Penn, Ingpen; Penny, Halfpenny; Bowler, Scorer, Fielder; Little, Bigge, Biggar; Rodrick, Todrick, Brodrick; Cann, Cannot; Goodyear, Badger (forgive the pun); Darling, Duck, Dear, Pett, Love, Sweet, Dovey, Honey, Mahoney, Spooner, Sutor; Gold, Silver, Argent, Cash, Money; Good, Vyle; Foot, Barefoot, Lightfoot, Crowfoot, Proudfoot, Puddifoot; Bonnyman, Pretyman, Sweetman, Trueman; Pagan, Christian; Church, Chapell; Divine, Worship; Buyers, Sellars; Latter, Last, Lesser, Leest; ffolkes, ffrench; English, Welsh, French, Dutch; Monk, Nunn, Friar, Prior, Priest, Pope; Kitchen, Kitchener, Kettle, Stove, Ovens, Bake, Boyle, Cook, Frizzle; Thorogood, Allgood, Goodenough; England, Brittain, Scotland, Wailes, Ireland, France, Holland, Spain.

The above, adds the writer, form only a small portion of his discoveries. How hard it was to select twelve for the competition may be judged by the following few selections from the names he obtained in addition to those he sent in:—

Hurt Sitwell, Magniac, Copperwaite, Traill Burroughs, Strongitharm, Wagenrieder, Wolley-Dod, Blennerhassett, Bunkum, Chestnutt, Cockayne Cust, Meanswell, Wedderspoon, Hunnybun.

Terrible News for Scotland. Mr. C. B. Fry sends me an essay on football, written by a boy on the training-ship *Mercury*, from which I gather that anyone playing football in Scotland *is liable to be put to death*. How this comes about, says our essayist, is as follows:—

When the game was first in vogue it used to be played so roughly that two or three men used to be killed, and several injured, in each match. James I., being present at one of these matches, was so horror-stricken, when, one after another, five men were carried off the field, dead, that he instantly ordered that anyone playing football was to suffer the extreme penalty of death. As this Act has never been repealed, it is decidedly risky nowadays to take part in the game.

It would appear that the early Scottish footballers must have hit each other with dirks or claymores, else why this mortality? It takes a lot of kicking to kill a man, and if the five men referred to above were killed by kicks, it seems to me that the ball must have been a good deal neglected. Mr. Fry tells me that such an act was certainly passed, and so, as it has not been repealed,

it is, as the *Mercury* essayist remarks, "decidedly risky" to play football in Scotland.

A Rook Story. I have heard a good many dog stories, but very few bird ones. In old-fashioned writings on natural history one comes across most astonishing fables about birds and beasts, all of which were in those days believed to be true. Plutarch was responsible for many quaint legends. Montaigne also has much to say of such doings, and tells us in one of his essays that "the little bird called the Wren" acts as a sentinel to the crocodile, pecking the monster in order to awake him on the approach of an enemy, in return for which services the crocodile allows the wren to feed upon his leavings. Montaigne probably got this story out of Herodotus; the bird alluded to by that writer, however, was not a wren, but the spur-winged lapwing (*Hoplopterus armatus*), a native of the Nile valley and other parts of Africa, Asia Minor, and South-east Europe, known to the Egyptians as the "zig-zag." This bird (Mr. Step has been good enough to inform me) has in recent years been observed to enter the open jaws of the crocodile repeatedly, apparently with the approval of the reptile, who opens his mouth to permit the bird to enter and leave, but what business the zig-zag transacts within is not definitely known. It may fairly be surmised, however, that it is there for scavenging purposes, as there are numerous commensal arrangements of this sort among animals of diverse orders. It would therefore appear that there is some slight foundation of truth in many of these legends which have come down to us. In fact, the subject is so interesting that I have asked Mr. Step to write us an article on "Animal Partnerships," wherein he will tell some curious things of widely diverse creatures that have become messmates. I started this paragraph, however, with the intention of putting before you a perfectly true story of a rook, the property, as an auction notice would say, of Mrs. Coulson Kernahan, wife of the famous author, and herself a novelist of distinction. Mrs. Kernahan related the story to me in her drawing-room one day, and was afterwards good enough to write it down and send it on to me. She says:—

As one person's food is another person's poison, so one person's hobby may be another person's grievance. I found this out in the early dawn, when the young rooks by my bedside began to ask for their breakfast, and my husband's voice rose in protest. He said, "I have put up with your young thrushes, your blackbirds, and linnets, BUT I WILL NOT PUT UP WITH YOUR YOUNG ROOKS!" So it will be seen that it was not without some skirmishing that I reared my rooks. But the amusement we get out of them is worth all the trouble, as even my husband owns. One rook in particular, who rejoices in the name of "Billum," is of an abnormal intelligence. He began to talk without any teaching. When the food is thrown down for him, he calls to his brother, "Johnnie, Johnnie, pick it up, come along!" But the funniest thing I know about concerns his treatment of a jackdaw. I introduced this jackdaw to Billum last spring, and the jackdaw, evidently mistaking Billum for his mother, squatted near him with gaping mouth and fluttering wings. Billum at once assumed the character of foster-mother to the newcomer, and fed him regularly for some weeks. But after that Billum got sick of the trouble, and made up his mind to "wean" the jackdaw. To this end he collected *rusty nails, buttons, and stones*, and every time the jackdaw presented himself to be fed, he gave him one of these objects. The jackdaw then, in his turn, got sick of it, and began to feed himself, though he still keeps up his devotion to his unnatural foster-parent, and is always in his train.

This Billum is quite the artfullest bird I have ever heard of. His plan for making the young jackdaw cater for himself was quite worthy, in subtlety, of a Heathen Chinee.

The Seven Ages of the Footballer:—The following is a clever parody by a contributor who in his day was one of the most prominent footballers in New Zealand. He modestly veils his identity under a Maori pseudonym:

All the world's a field,
And all the men and youngsters merely players;
They have their Rugger and their Soccer codes,
And one man in his time plays many games,
His acts being seven ages. At first the infant,
Kicking and dribbling in his nurse's arms,
With soft rubber ball crammed into mouth,
The only goal in his small baby mind.
And then the grinning schoolboy, with coat and cap
Thrown down for goal, oft runs the risk of cane
For being late. And then the junior,
Roaring like furnace that all are cheats,
And making rules to suit. Then the paid man,
Full of strange oaths, with jacket like the pard,
Jealous of his mate, sudden and quick to quarrel,
Seeking the wages reputation
Even in the mouth of goal. And then the linesman
With eyes severe and face of knowing cut,
Full of wise saws and ancient instances—
And so he plays his part. The sixth age shifts
To stout and knickerbockered president,
With spectacles on nose and baccy-pouch in hand,
His youthful hose, well saved, a world too tight
For his fat shank. Then his big, manly voice
And laugh are heard, as oft he fills his pipe

And listens to the whistle sound. Last scene
That ends this strange, eventful history,
Is the Referee, whose second childishness
And mere oblivion to rules has caused the crowd
To rush the ground. In vain to reach his cab
He strives. Thanks to the bobbies' tender care
The haven gains. And so he plays his part,
Sans teeth, sans hat, sans clothes, sans everything.

"AKARANA."

The Men we Want in Canada.

—I am another CAPTAIN reader (writes Harry Cross, Toronto, Canada) who has come out here to make his fortune, and, having had time to have a good look round, will take advantage of the Old Fag's invitation to tell my fellow Clubites the sort of man we want in this, the land of plenty. We want men with agricultural knowledge, and with some capital at their disposal, especially if they intend to emigrate to the north-west. It is not absolutely necessary to have capital, however, unless you are taking up a farm at once, as in Ontario labour is badly needed, and experienced men who are not afraid of work can lure themselves out for a few years until they have saved enough money to buy a farm of their own. In fact, no man need come out to Canada—or to any of the Colonies, for that matter—unless he is prepared to work hard, as Canada has no use for idle men. The men we want are those who will exert themselves to make a success of whatever profession, trade, or calling they may take up. If any of you are desirous of coming out to take up fruit-farming, the district to go to is from Hamilton, on the shores of Lake Ontario, right round the bend as far as Niagara. All that tract of land is the great fruit-growing district of Eastern Canada. For farming, Ontario is the best province for beginners, if young men or middle-aged men without experience.

With regard to office work in Canada, there are really enough of Canada's own sons to fill these positions, but if a Briton is out of employment, is possessed of good abilities, and can show good references, there is no reason why he should not get on in Canada if he sticks at his work. I cannot advise any man to leave office work at home to come out to Canada to fill a similar capacity, unless he is sure of work here before coming. I am speaking from experience, not merely from hearsay.

The way to obtain employment in Canadian cities if you have not done so before leaving England, is to make a tour of the city you have selected to stop at, and ask people if they want labour. Say you have just come out from the Old Country and want work, and pay particular attention to what each person says—if they are unable to give you work at once, but invite you to call again. Do so, and keep on calling until you get work. I did this in the Queen City of the Dominion—Toronto—the very day the big fire started.

Finally, do not be ashamed of taking anything, no matter what it is, for a start, so long as it is honest. Then look out for something better, working hard meanwhile at the job you have undertaken. That is the way to make a start, and if you apply yourself conscientiously to whatever comes to hand, you will go far towards attaining success in the land of your adoption.

School Sports: I have received from "A Present Westminster," "An Edwardian," and G. A. Ledingham (whom I thank for their courtesy) Sports' results respectively of Westminster, King Edward the Sixth's, Birmingham, and Aberdeen Grammar School. In the case of the King Edward's Sports the ground was in a very bad condition, with frequent storms blowing across. I append the times, &c.:—

WESTMINSTER SCHOOL.

300 Yards.—J. C. Vernon, 37 1-5sec.
Half-Mile with Hurdles.—G. M. Castle-Smith, 2min. 29sec.
Throwing the Hammer.—R. G. Gardner, 60ft.
Long Jump.—E. W. D. Colt-Williams, 17ft. 1in.
Half-Mile. F. C. Callos, 2min. 13 3-5sec.
Throwing the Cricket Ball.—E. W. D. Colt-Williams, 102yds.
Quarter-Mile A. C. Bottomley, 58sec.
100 Yards E. W. D. Colt Williams, 11sec.
High Jump.—J. K. Hepburn, 4ft. 10¾in.
Hurdle Race. J. K. Hepburn, 19sec.
One Mile. G. M. Castle-Smith, 5min 10sec.
Gymnasium. -B. V. T. Worthington.
Fencing.—D. J. Jardine

KING EDWARD'S, BIRMINGHAM.

100 Yards. L. Whitcombe, 11 2-5sec.
220 Yards. L. Whitcombe, 26sec.
Half Mile. -F. Eglington, 2min. 16sec.
Quarter-Mile.—L. Whitcombe. 56 3-5sec.
One Mile.—C. G. Naish, 5min. 8 3-5sec.
High Jump.—R. Crichton, 5ft.
Long Jump.—F Eglington, 18ft. 9¾in.
Throwing the Cricket Ball.—A. T. Cond, 84yds. 2ft. 1in.
Putting the Weight (16lb.).—R. Crichton, 30ft 7½in.
120 Yards with Hurdles.—H. S. Tasker, 19 2-5sec.

ABERDEEN GRAMMAR SCHOOL.

High Jump.—G. McDonald, 5ft. 2in.
Long Jump.—D. N. Lowe, 17ft. 6in.
Hurdle Race (100yds).—G. E. Scroggie, 11 4-5sec.

Putting the Weight (16lb.).—D. N. Lowe, 30ft. 8in.
Half-Mile.—R. W. Eddie, 2min. 14 3-5sec.
Former Pupils' Race (100yds.).—D. J. Jamieson, 10 4-5sec.
Throwing the Hammer (16lb.).—G. McDonald, 61ft. 8in.
Throwing the Cricket Ball.—R. Semple, 91yds 2ft. 4in.
Quarter-Mile.—D. N. Lowe, 60 2-3sec.
Mile.—R. W. Eddie, 5min. 50sec.
Former Pupils' Mile.—W Miller, 5min. 4 1-5sec.

It will be observed that King Edward's is easily first in the Long Jump, with Aberdeen second, and Westminster third. King Edward's is first by a trifle in the Mile, Westminster second, and Aberdeen a bad third. The last-named, however, is first in the High Jump, with King Edward's second, and Westminster third with a poor jump of under 5ft. Unfortunately, the Aberdeen correspondent did not include his 100yds. time, so a comparison is impossible. In future, correspondents sending Sports Results are requested to limit themselves to the main events, *i.e.*, Mile, Half-Mile, Quarter-Mile, 100yds. Hurdles, High Jump, Long Jump, Throwing the Cricket Ball, Weight and Hammer. Then we shall be able to tabulate them properly.

Junior Sports: Hitherto I have only given results of sports contested by senior members of schools. As it will be interesting to see what younger boys can perform, I append the principal results of the sports held at Ryde House School, Ripley, Surrey, which are kindly forwarded to me by R. Woollard. The oldest boys contesting in these sports were not above sixteen. The 100 Yards Scratch Race was won by Lauderdale in 11sec., and the Seniors' High Jump by the same boy. The Seniors' Long Jump was won by Strugnell with a 16ft. leap and the same boy threw the cricket ball furthest—74½ yards. The Juniors' Long Jump was won by Gammon, with 12ft. 6in.; and the Quarter Mile Handicap by Lauderdale (who, I presume, started scratch) in 1min. 6 1-5sec. Of the swimming races, the 700 Yards was won by G. Swabey, in 12min. 15sec., but the results of the other races I am unable to give, as my correspondent has omitted to fill in the times.

Alderman Newton's School (Leicester): Swimming Sports. Mr. S. H. Stroud, one of our readers, favours me with a newspaper cutting and some remarks of his own concerning these sports. I cannot deal with them at length, but I notice that in the Seniors' Long Dive H. Thomsett covered 36ft. 1½in. Thomsett, my correspondent informs me, came second in the schoolboys' swimming championship of England. A fine achievement, considering he is not yet fifteen years old. The Learners' Race was a good idea, being a race for boys who could not swim last season. The Female Character Race was very laughable, as the boys entered the water in women's clothes, swam the length of the bath, undressed in the water, and swam back. Mr. J. A. Jarvis, the famous swimmer, was present, and gave an interesting display of ornamental swimming, whilst Miss Ethel Jarvis, aged seven, presented a remarkable exhibition of life-saving, twice being successful in conveying her father from one side of the bath to the other. The School Championship 100 Yards Scratch Race was, I note, won by Thomsett in 1min.

A Round-the-World Letter. From Kumaon, India, to the CAPTAIN office, *viâ* Australasia, South Africa, Canada, United States, and the British West Indies, is a far cry, but such is the distance traversed by a circular sent out by Mr. Brian Alfred Harris, which eventually arrived at this office after having been the round of a dozen Colonial readers. I compliment Mr. Harris on his happy idea, and thank my far-away friends for their cordial expressions of opinion with regard to THE CAPTAIN. They will know by this time that I have attended to their one complaint by allowing them another month in which to send in competitions.

Our Book Corner. I hope this new feature of ours will be followed closely by school and institute librarians, as well as by the general reader, for we shall make it our endeavour to give perfectly fair notices, and only recommend what is really worth reading. I have divided the books up among several gentlemen who write regularly for THE CAPTAIN, and who have taken pains to find out what boys appreciate in literature. In the newspaper press too little attention is paid to boys' books. They are lumped up together in a general column, sometimes as many as eighteen or twenty being knocked off in a batch, with a few lines apiece. Writing to one of my reviewers, I

told him that I hoped, in this newly-established Corner, to deal thoroughly with such works as were submitted for review. He replied: "It's an excellent idea—boys' books never seem to be properly noticed. A tale of adventure, or a school story, is dismissed in a sugary paragraph which says that the volume is 'just the thing for the youthful mind,' or 'has a healthy tone,' and no one can judge whether the book is good, bad, or indifferent. People seem to forget the educational importance of boys' books, though they shriek loud enough over the iniquity of the 'penny blood.' I shall enjoy doing the reviews, especially as you leave it to me to speak my mind openly. That gives one scope."

How to Join the Royal Navy.—It may interest my readers to be put in possession of a few details concerning a most interesting establishment, "an open door" to the Royal Navy. The establishment in question is the training ship *Mercury*, moored in the Hamble River, and presided over by Captain C. A. R. Hoare, President of the Hampshire Cricket Club. Captain Hoare not only actually maintains a training ship for the Royal Navy, but he passes into the Navy first-class boys—first-class too, according to the Admiralty standard—boys who promise to turn into all-round handy men—good at schoolwork, swimming, football, cricket, gymnastics, and music. Many *Mercury* boys have passed through Kneller Hall; many are now bandmasters in the Royal Navy. The reports of the boys now serving all over the world are of the most encouraging and satisfactory description. *Mercury* boys are in the habit of picking up most of the seamanship prizes and "all-round-boys'" prizes, such as a ship like the *Impregnable* gives away once a year. One Royal Humane Society medal was won by a boy while on the training ship *Mercury* for saving life under proper drowning conditions, with a strong tide running.

The *Mercury* school standard and ideals are all that can be desired. Corporal punishment is unknown on board, and the religious life of every boy on the vessel is well and duly cared for. Full particulars may be obtained from Captain Hoare, Training Ship *Mercury*, Hamble, Southampton.

ANSWERS TO OTHER CORRESPONDENTS.

H. F. Birchal (Shanghai).—You write vigorously, but the article does not make pleasant reading, and the photo of the "Death-Cage" with its dying occupant is simply horrible—far too horrible to be printed in any self-respecting magazine or newspaper.

S. T. B. V. E.—Don't talk nonsense. So far from THE CAPTAIN hindering your work, it should provide you with pleasant relaxation after your daily "grind" for your scholarship. You have only yourself to blame if you allow any book or periodical to hinder you. There is a time for everything in a properly mapped out day.

T. Grant.—We are holding your article over till next November. We cannot use copyright photos without permission from the photographer. Can't you get a friend to take a good "snap" of Catesby's rooms?

A. Scott, jun.—If I can get hold of enough illegible signatures of famous men to make a list long enough for a deciphering competition, I will put your suggestion into shape, as it is a decidedly good one.

"Old Tuds."—That's right. Go on pegging away till you win a prize. The golden rule in all endeavour that one should constantly bear in mind is that it is "dogged as does it."

Nobody's Fag.—It is just possible that your friend did not know the letter was from you. Whether you should write to him again depends entirely upon the state of your feelings towards him. Perhaps he will write to you at Christmas. Let us hope he will.

"Captain" Club at Durham.—CAPTAIN readers in Durham and district may be interested to hear that a club has been formed in Durham, on the lines suggested in this magazine some little time ago, by Mr Walter G. Vann, 9 Ravensworth-terrace, Durham, who will be glad to send particulars to any of our readers wishing to join it.

Denis Wilson.—The very best of Christmases to you, too! The art-editor is flourishing, and is now the proud father of a little girl, one of the only two babies who have received a congratulatory telegram on their arrival in this vale of tears (and smiles) from my venerable self. The other baby is my god-daughter, so my bowed back is now bearing an additional responsibility of no mean order.

J. C. Young.—This magazine is hardly a suitable vehicle for the kind of articles you mention. Nevertheless, I commend your earnestness in so important a cause.

"London Irish."—Thanks for your suggestion for a pictorial competition, which I will remember. As regards Irish and Scottish cricket, I think both countries ought to be able to whip up an eleven good enough to meet our counties. A tour of an Irish or Scottish team would be most popular and attract a lot of spectators. Why don't you write to your papers and suggest it?

J. B. C.—You appear to be too self-conscious about your looks. Don't play about with so-called depilatories (or hair-destroyers), which only cause the hair to grow again all the thicker. Electrolysis is the only sure method of removing superfluous hair, and it is a slow, painful, and expensive method. My advice to you is: leave your eyebrows alone. Those who interfere with Nature generally live to repent it.

"Rabbits."—Candidates for British Consulates must be between 25 and 50 years of age, and, in the first place, have direct or indirect influence with the Secretary of State. If selected, they are required to pass an examination in ordinary

English subjects, French, mercantile law, and the current language of their consulate. The fee for this examination varies from £1 to £6, according to the value of the appointment desired. The salaries of consuls range from £200 to £1,000, promotions and transfers being made as vacancies occur.

Thistle.—You do not say if you have had any previous training in practical engineering, and therefore in advising you I shall assume that you have only had the ordinary school training. In that case it would be best for you to attend for one or two years at one of the best technical institutes. The South-Western Polytechnic, Manresa Road, Chelsea, S.W., would probably suit you excellently. After that your best course would be to attend one of the higher technical colleges, such as the Central Institution, Exhibition Road, S.W., where you would get more advanced training.

M. N. A.—Wearing glasses would debar your entering the Merchant Service in the "deck department," which is composed of the working crew, from cabin-boy to captain. This only leaves the purser's and steward's departments open to you. To secure a berth you must take a walk round the nearest docks, and interview chief stewards and pursers. The outfit would cost from £8 to £10, and the commencing salary as mess-room steward would be from 35s. to £2 5s. per month.

T. E. R.—You should enter the publishing business in the ordinary way—as a clerk in the office, and in the course of time you would acquire a knowledge of the firm's publications and of the trade generally. If you take a keen interest in your work, and endeavour to make yourself as useful as possible to your employers, there is no reason why you should not rise to a position of some importance. There is no special preparation required, but of course a knowledge of Latin, French, and German would be valuable to you.

"Arts and Crafts" is an excellent monthly periodical for those interested in painting and sketching, leather embossing, wood-carving, gesso work, repoussé work, and embroidery. It is published by Messrs. Hutchinson and Co., price 1s. net.

E. S. (Putney).—Your verses on "Hope" show promise. You will do well to persevere, always endeavouring to express yourself simply and directly.

J. E. (Salop).—What a brilliant envelope! No, I am not Mr. Keble Howard. He is the editor of the *Sketch*.

A. H. Grigsby.—No number of Hon. Mens. will win you a prize. You can only win a prize by sending in the best effort in your class.

Lupus.—Apply to the Civil Service Commissioners, Burlington Gardens, S.W. **"Nemo."**—The *Nautical Almanack* is published by Brown Bros., Pollokshields, Glasgow, price 1s. **R. H. T.**—Address your complaint to the publishers of the paper in question. **K. T. S.**—Only a few pence, and as old silver they are worth even less. **M. C.** You can obtain particulars about California from the High Commissioner for Canada, Victoria Street, S.W. **E. F.**—(1) "Sir Billy" has not been published in book form. (2) Write to the Secretary of the B. E. L., 56 Ludgate Hill, E.C., for particulars of the League. **"Black Quill."**—No space for a list of books; send a stamped, addressed envelope for reply. **Vere Bannerman.**—Which do you mean, a bailiff or a house and estate agent?

Letters, &c., have also to be acknowledged from:—Fred. Hill, L. H. Hadden, W. Jungius, H. Cleaver, C. W. E. Pitt, C. James, F. Cartmel, P. Rowland, P. Hoad, E. W. Soulsby, E. S. Collier (Johannesburg), "Hopeful May," "Channel Islander," Reg Doollard, "S." (Southsea), R. C. Tharp, C.H., M. Toole, T. W. (1s 10d., post free), Porangi Potae, H. M. Cooper, "The Abbess," and many other correspondents whose queries will receive attention next month.

THE OLD FAG.

[Owing to lack of space we are compelled to hold over "Captain Club Contributions."]

Results of November Competitions.

No. I.—"Famous Cricketers."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-one.)

WINNER OF "MAGIC" FOOTBALL: Geo. A. B. Cushnie, 163 Grove-street, Liverpool.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: J. C. Matthew, 6 Mamhead View, Exmouth; George Russell, 4 Chandos-road, Causeway, Staines, Middlesex.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Ernest H. Lucas, A. Tadman, H. W. McRae, G. H. R. Laird, J. G. Dunham, W. S. Clark, V. Birtles, Frederick H. Maynard.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF PRIZE: T. S. Clarke, Hyndlee, Nairn, N.B.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: Arthur Thomas, Bank House, Pembroke Dock; L. F. Page, Beaumont College, Old Windsor, Berks.

HONOURABLE MENTION: W. Hodgson, N. Whitehead, A. Sheldon, T. Kitchin, N. R. Taylor, E. Cawthorn, K. J. Cox, E. J. Selby, J. L. Henderson, E. C. Cockburn.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Twelve.)

WINNER OF PRIZE: W. T. Clark, 16 Petworth street, Battersea Park, S.W.

HONOURABLE MENTION: P. C. Hoyland, W. P. Benson, Marjorie Gwynne, R. Bloom, E. Harrington, L. L. Norris, L. Aldbone, K. F. Watson, H. Wilson, R. P. Graham, E. Peach.

No. II.—"Stamp Collectors' Competition."

CLASS I. (No age limit.)

WINNER OF NO. 2 CENTAFILE OUTFIT: Rev. Alfred Marshall Parkes, Netherton Parsonage, Wakefield.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE HAS BEEN AWARDED TO: Frederick H. Collins, Bridge House, Didsbury, Manchester.

HONOURABLE MENTION: F. H. Collins, W. Eastburn, T. R. Worthington, S. E. Churchill, J. W. Connell, Maud M. Lyne, G. Barter.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Twenty-one.)

WINNER OF "CENTURY" STAMP ALBUM: Joseph Williams Dell, Marshall road, Farncombe, near Godalming.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: Tommie Thomson, 111 Sinclair-road, W. Kensington, W.; W. F. Curtis, c/o Mrs. G. Edmonds, Cheap-street, Sherborne, Dorset.

HONOURABLE MENTION: James Bland, P. Croysdale Cleminson, C. E. Tucker, E. Mayell, W. G. Palmer, H. G. N. Tucker, A. Tapply.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF "CENTURY" STAMP ALBUM: A. C. Flewitt, 77 Masters-road, W. Bridgford, Nottingham.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE HAS BEEN AWARDED TO: Leslie Lascelles Norris, 18 Lansdowne-road, Tottenham.

HONOURABLE MENTION: W. F. Dame, George R. Wood, Bertrand Hatties, C. J. G. Allcock, L. J. Hodson, C. W. Dockerill, Geoffrey C. Leech, R. W. Dale, Harold F. Walton, L. Costa, R. G. Harrison, L. J. Taylor, C. E. Sweney.

No. III.—"Photographic Competition."

CLASS I. (No age limit.)

WINNER OF COLUMBIA GRAMOPHONE: T. E. W. Strong, St. Anne's road, W. St. Anne's on Sea, Lancs.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: R. W. Capeman, Town View, Wincanton; Harry W. Witcombe, Castlebrook, Holland-road, Maidstone.

HONOURABLE MENTION: M. C. Rhodes, J. J. R. H. Oldham, F. M. Ryalls, Ashley V. Taylor, J. H. Crabtree, Mrs. Pratt, Edgar Swallow, Herbert Halliday, Robert Oliver, W. Denys

Weston, George Nuttall, T. H. Jones, Charles Blair, Ursula M. Peek, Emily M. Colman, R. Barnes.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Twenty-one.)

WINNER OF "SUNNY MEMORIES" ALBUM: Evelyne Blacker, 20 Victoria square, W., Clifton, Bristol.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: K. W. Dowie, 223 Commissioners street, Montreal, Canada; R. E. O. Chipp, Beaumont, Malone, Belfast.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Albert Lingham, G. S. B. Cushnie, G. Baxter, W. H. Pearson, E. W. Willett, H. F. Woods, A. W. Foster, John Harman Young, Cicely Banister, S. V. F. Griffiths, Owain Ogwen, W. L. Taylor, A. E. Bass.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF "SUNNY MEMORIES" ALBUM: Vyvyan Poole, 34 Mall, Waterford.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: Arthur de C. Williams, The College, Winchester; Dorothy Alice Hilton, Oaklands, Sturry, near Canterbury.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Arthur F. Heynes, William G. Briggs, Robert H. Bacon, William Stanworth, Hilda Bellamy, Alex. Tosland, Reginald C. Kershaw, S. J. Higgs, J. W. Smith, G. Holmapfel, E. C. Pinder, H. J. Sanders.

No. IV.—"A November Event."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-one.)

WINNER OF SANDOW DEVELOPER: William Kentish, Bahnain Lodge, Trafalgar-road, Moseley, Birmingham.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: E. Wharrier-Soulsby, 104 Joan street, New Benwell, Newcastle-on-Tyne; Helen C. Stone, Ewell, Surrey.

HONOURABLE MENTION: R. J. Smyth, W. G. Palmer, H. F. Rowe, Ethel Rainer, Eric M. Ritchie, G. Barker, W. F. Curtis, W. A. Oldfield, G. E. Russell, F. G. Grigsby.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF SANDOW DEVELOPER: William M. Marshall, Elizabeth College, Guernsey, Channel Islands.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: Geoffrey C. Leech, South Hill House, Bury St. Edmunds; Raymond Bladon, 33 Blake-lane, Small Heath, Birmingham.

HONOURABLE MENTION: C. W. Dockerill, J. E. Lucas, H. S. Rooh, F. C. Rosser, J. G. Macdonald, S. R. C. Kimsell, A. W. Douglas, Frits Davies.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Twelve.)

WINNER OF SANDOW DEVELOPER: R. J. Evans, 77 High street, Bridgnorth, Salop.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Thomas Morris.

No. V.—"Map of Korea."

CLASS I. (Age limit: Twenty-one.)

WINNER OF "HOBBIES" FRETWORK OUTFIT: Alexander McMillan, 19 Abbeyhill, Edinburgh.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE HAS BEEN AWARDED TO: Howard W. Smith, 2 Ebenezer-terrace, Enfield Town, Middlesex.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Kate Perrin, Charles W. Hubble, Edward Horace Skinner, Jessie Procter, A. H. Millis, Harold W. Smith, F. M. R. Smith, L. E. V. Tiffen, Mawgan Fremlin, Alfred T. Hurt, J. Hunter Watts, jun., Mary F. Gaskell.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF "HOBBIES" FRETWORK OUTFIT: S. G. Alexander, 97 Joppa-road, Portobello.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: Alfred E. Farmer, 83 Abington avenue, East Park, Northampton; Frida Phillips, High Elms, Ritchin, Herts.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Basil M. Peek, Norman Mackellar, R. V. Southwell, T. H. Somervell, William Webb, Barry Davies, F. C. Millington, George Bourne, W. T. O. Zeroni, Albert Wheeler, Constance Wilmott, George Mearns.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Twelve.)

WINNER OF "HOBBIES" FRETWORK OUTFIT: Fred. Staddon, 206 Gladstone street, Bradford, Yorks.

A CONSOLATION PRIZE HAS BEEN AWARDED TO: George Cossins, Tarrant Rawston, Blandford, Dorset.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Harry A. Moncrieff, S. F. Russell, Charles Burrows, William Watt, John Atkins Brain, Leonard A. Self, J. H. Chambers, W. S. Osborn, W. L. McNair, E. A. S. Peach, James T. Nelis, Aubrey George Rand.

No. VI.—"Six Favourite Authors."

CLASS I. (No age limit.)

WINNER OF "JOHN PIGOTT" FOOTBALL: P. A. Gardner, 2 Manor Way, Bexley, Kent.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Jas. J. Nevin, G. Berry, Maud M. Lyne, George Rosser, R. Bruce Beveridge, R. H. Oakley, Helen C. Tancock, Harold Russell, E. A. Banson, James B. Atkinson, John Thomer.

CLASS II. (Age limit: Twenty-one.)

WINNER OF "JOHN PIGOTT" FOOTBALL: Randolph Pawlby, 12 Maida Vale terrace, Plymouth.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: Geo. H. Webber, 63 Glenparke-road, Forest Gate, E.; George S. Jessup, 150 Lundell-crescent, Grimsby-road, New Cleethorpes.

HONOURABLE MENTION: Edward Burke-Gaffney, E. W. Lynam, Rita Johns, Frank Barnes, A. J. Gaskell, S. G. Harris, K. Jordan, John G. Macdonald, W. J. Juteff.

CLASS III. (Age limit: Sixteen.)

WINNER OF "JOHN PIGOTT" FOOTBALL: George Barraud, Rose Cottage, Longlands Park, Sidcup, Kent.

CONSOLATION PRIZES HAVE BEEN AWARDED TO: Chas. Hopkins, 88 Kingswood road, New Brompton, Kent; Lucy Ehrmann, 39 Ufford-road, London, N.

HONOURABLE MENTION: B. W. Dale, G. T. Lawrence, G. Dun, Thelma Cook, Thomas Proud, Dora Roscoe, Roland H. Deakin, Albert Boxall, Thomas Owen, A. Thompson, E. Sweney.

Foreign and Colonial Readers.—(October 1904)

No. I.—WINNER OF 5s.: S. Westmore James, 19 St. Vincent-street, Port of Spain, Trinidad. Honourable Mention: R. D. Mookerjea (India), Digby Harris (India).

No. II.—WINNER OF 5s.: B. Goodbrand, Talana Villa, Winder-road, Stamford Hill, Durban, Natal, South Africa. Honourable Mention: B. A. Harris (India), D. G. Harris, May Edwards (South Africa).

No. III.—WINNER OF 5s.: O. L. Samuel, 131 Orange-street, Kingston, Jamaica. Honourable Mention: R. D. Mookerjea, Mabel I. L. Davis (British Guiana), H. Goodbrand, Cecil Wharton (Trinidad), S. Westmore James, D. G. Harris, Alfred Keen (Canada).

No. IV.—WINNER OF 5s.: Arnold Brigden, 103 Rose avenue, Toronto, Canada. Honourable Mention: K. V. Samuel (Jamaica), J. W. Stanley (Canada), H. Goodbrand.

No. V.—WINNER OF 5s.: Brankess, Wynberg, S. Africa. Honourable Mention: May Edwards, Mabel I. L. Davis, Digby Harris, B. Harris, S. Westmore James.

No. VI.—WINNER OF 5s.: B. D. Mookerjea, Bankipore, India. Honourable Mention: D. G. Harris, S. W. James.

Winners of Consolation Prizes are requested to inform the Editor which they would prefer—a volume of the "Captain," "Strand," "Sunday Strand," "Wide World," "Technics," "C. B. Fry's Magazine," or one of the following books—"Jim Mortimer, Surgeon," "J. O. Jones," "Tales of Greyhouse," "Actoe's Feud," "The Heart of the Prairie."

Comments on the November Competitions.

No. I.—A correct list will be found on an advertisement page. A fair number of competitors in Classes I. and II. sent in correct solutions, so that neatness counted considerably in my selection of prize-winners.

No. II.—The tabulated list as voted, is as follows:—

(1) It is an excellent Hobby.
(2) It teaches Geography.
(3) It is a good Investment.
(4) It teaches History.
(5) It teaches Method and Observation.
(6) It is a Bond of Union between all collectors.

There was a large number of entries for this competition, but many failed to understand the conditions and sent in elaborate essays instead of the tabulated list required.

No. III.—A varied selection of subjects was submitted, showing a marked improvement in all classes.

No. IV.—The favourite subjects chosen for essays were the Battle of Inkerman, the Opening of the Suez Canal, and the Relief of Lucknow. The Death of Cardinal Wolsey also found several recorders.

No. V.—Not an easy country perhaps, to delineate, but some well drawn and topographically good maps were sent in.

No. VI.—There was a specially large number of entries for this competition in Class III., the winning list of which is as follows:—

Charles Dickens—*Pickwick Papers.*
Sir Walter Scott—*Ivanhoe.*
G. A. Henty—*St. George for England.*
R. S. Warren Bell—*J. O. Jones.*
H. Rider Haggard—*Cleopatra.*
Sir A. Conan Doyle—*Rodney Stone.*

FOREIGN AND COLONIAL READERS.—While renewing my acquaintance with many old friends, I was pleased to welcome several new competitors from all Colonies.

THE COMPETITION EDITOR.

HAMLEY'S NOVELTIES.

HAMLEY'S Speciality.
Boxes of Surprises.

Box containing 1 Flying Sausage, 1 Flying Bushs, 2 Howling Bubbles, 2 Coons, 1 Balloon, 1 Blow-out Cigar, 1 Fife, 1 Flying Serpent. All of these blow out and squeak, causing roars of laughter. Price 1/-; Post Free, 1/3.

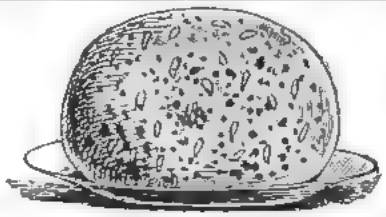
Smaller Box, containing 7 Surprises. Price 6d.; Post Free, 7d.

Boxes of Flying Serpents, containing 7 different colours. Price 6d.; Post Free, 7d.

Serpent Peach. Post Free, 2d.

The Simplex Typewriter.

Useful and amusing and simple to work. Complete in box, with ink and full directions. Price, No. 1, 5/-, No. 2, 12/6 & 25/-. Box and Post 6d. and 1/- extra.



Xmas Plum Pudding, made in Gold Beater's Skin for inflating with gas. These puddings are put on to a dish under a cover, and when it is removed fly up to the ceiling, causing much amusement. Price 2/-; Post Free, 2/3.

Magnetic Wonders.

A Box of Apparatus for experimenting with a Magnet. Very clever and amusing.

Price 1/- Post Free, 1/3. Larger Size 2/- Post Free, 2/4.

Electric Scarf Pin.

A pretty and effective novelty, that can be worn in the necktie, and by pressing a button an electric light will appear.

A brilliant Stone Pin, Devil's Head, Cow's Head, or Skeleton's Head.

Price 2/11. Post Free 3/3.

Superior Electric Pocket Lamp.
Price 1/6. Post Free, 1/8.

1/- NOVELTIES. Post Free, 1/3.

The World's Savings Bank.
The Royal Horse Artillery Gun.
The Maxim Gun. Mexican Repeater.
The Wonderful Gyromope Top.
Marvellous Diver, goes under Water.

The Surprise Hunter.

A Great Novelty and Joke. A paper cap is inserted inside, and when the top is pressed it goes off with a loud report, causing much laughter.

Price 6d.; Post Free, 8d.

The Surprise Torch.

By pressing the bottom a spring jumps up, causing much astonishment and laughter.

Price 6d.; Post Free, 8d.

The Latest Novelty.

A nickel tube in the shape of a telescope with a piece to look through at the top. You ask someone to look through it, and regulate it to suit the sight by twisting the screw, when he is surprised by receiving a shower of water in his face.

Price 1/-; Post Free, 1/3.

6d. NOVELTIES. Post Free, 7d.

Packet of Magic Flowers.
Wizard of North Pack of Cards.
The Three Card Trick.
The Ever-Changing Card.
The Marvellous Bubbler.
The Funny Chinese Tumbler.
The Wonderful Flying Bat.
The Little Printer.

Crystal Gazing Ball and Book.
A look into the future.
Price 2/9; Post Free, 3/1.

Boxes of Drawing Room Fireworks.
Price 1/-, Post Free, 1/3.
" 2/6 " 2/9

A Complete Set of "**Shadowgraphy,**" containing every piece of apparatus named in the book. There are about 30 different pieces, and exactly the same as used by TREWEY.

Price only 1/6; Post Free, 2/3.

Book only 6d., Post Free.

Chapeaugraphy. Or Twenty Five Heads Under One Hat.
Price 6d., Post Free, 7d.

A Complete Set of Apparatus, [illegible], &c., &c., for **Chapeaugraphy**. An immense success for Public Entertainments, Private Parties, Bazaars, Penny Readings, &c. &c.

Price 10/6 complete; Post Free, 11/-.

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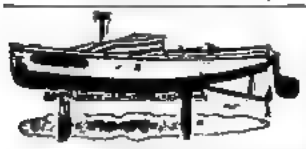

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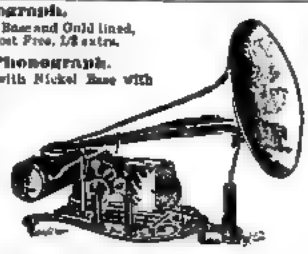

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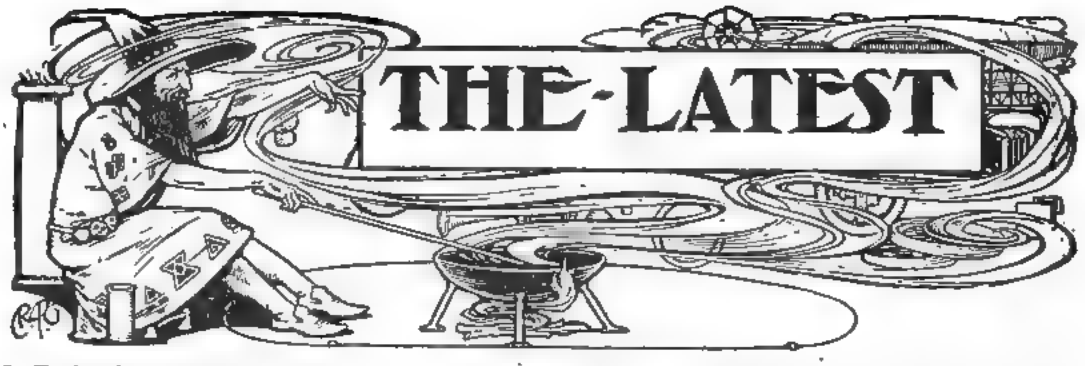
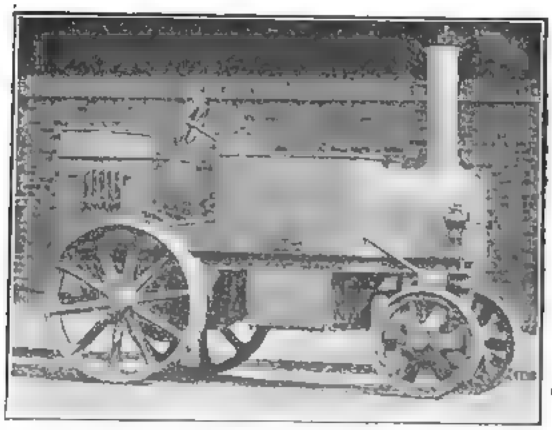


A Petrol Motor Tractor.

Messrs. John I. Thornycroft and Co., Ltd., have recently designed something quite new in mechanical tractors. This firm's steam motor wagons have been famous for some years past,



PETROL MOTOR TRACTOR.

but in the machine here illustrated petrol is utilised as the motive power. The engine is of the internal combustion type, having two cylinders of 6in. diameter by 8in. stroke, and giving 25 brake horse-power at normal revolutions. On ordinary hard macadam roads, this engine will draw a gross load of up to 6½ tons, and with this load surmount a gradient of 1 in 8. By the use of "spuds" fitted to the driving wheels the tractor will extricate itself from soft ground with ease. Three normal speeds are provided by changes of gear. These are 1½, 4, and 8 miles an hour, but each may be varied at the discretion of the driver by means of a throttle-valve. Moreover, these speeds may be obtained equally well in the reverse direction as when running chimney foremost. Fuel capacity is provided sufficient for a run of sixty miles, and this may be increased by about fifty miles by carrying an additional tank in the rear locker. The water tank needs refilling every thirty miles. The gross weight of the tractor is three tons, and its dimensions are, 12ft. 6in. long, 6ft. 4in. wide, and 10ft. 2in. high.

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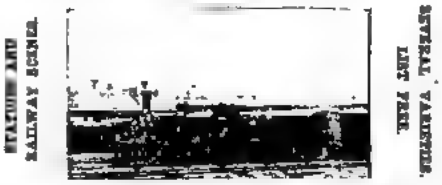

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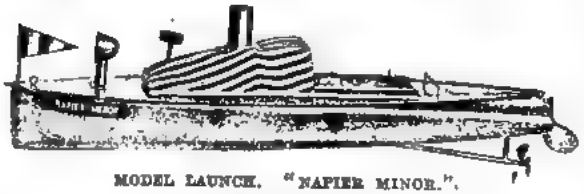

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A Hamley Christmas.

Some of Messrs. Hamley Bros.' numerous novelties for those in doubt about selecting their Christmas presents are pictured on this page. For the baby, there is the nest of eight Russian Mannikin Dolls, which all open out of each other in a most ingenious fashion. Then, at varying prices, you may obtain a working model of the motor racing boat, *Napier Minor*. Laughter for the whole family will be caused by the "Christmas Plum Pudding" illustrated herewith. It is made of gold-beater's skin for inflating with gas. A pudding of this nature should be put on a dish under a cover, and when this is removed up goes the pudding to the ceiling, causing much amusement—and all for two shillings! Amongst other Hamley novelties may be mentioned "surprise telescopes," watches which make loud reports when innocently opened, and the marvellous "Simplex" typewriter—that really writes—and costs only 12s. 6d. Last, but not least, are the shilling boxes of "Surprise Novelties," containing "flying sausages," "blow-out cigars," "howling babies," and many other weird contrivances. One of Messrs. Hamley Bros.' numerous addresses is 512 and 510A Oxford-street, London, W.

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The accompanying sketch gives one a good idea of the nature of the game of "Rollemin." The fact that this game can be played indoors on any small table has at once placed it in great demand, so that the sole makers, Messrs. John Jaques and Son, Ltd., 102 Hatton Garden, London, have been kept very busy of late supplying orders from those desirous of enjoying the new game to the full during the Christmas holidays. The method of play is quite novel, and the inventor has displayed considerable ingenuity in drawing up a short and lucid list of rules. "Rollemin" is distinctly a game of skill.

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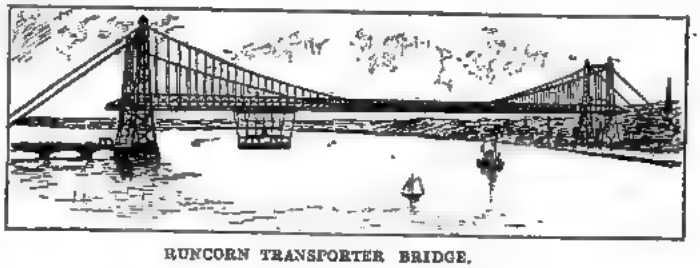

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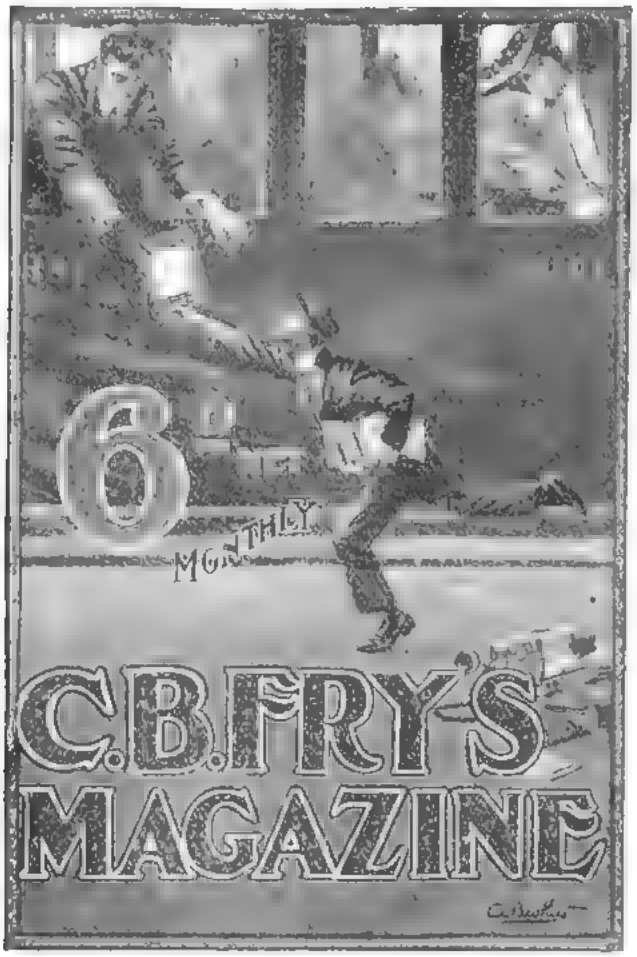

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LEAGUE NOTES FOR JANUARY, 1905.

THIS page is open every month for the insertion of reports and announcements concerning the numerous branches of the Boys' Empire League. Club secretaries are requested to send such notices to the Organising Secretary, B.E.L., at 56 Ludgate Hill, E.C., by the 26th of every month. Forms for this purpose can be obtained on application to the Secretary.

The Secretary would be pleased to hear from readers of THE CAPTAIN in all parts of the Empire on matters affecting the doings and welfare of the League and its members. As it is, he receives regular communications from all our principal Colonies, and has quite recently had interesting letters from CAPTAIN readers living in such widely scattered regions as Buenos Ayres, Malay, and Fiji.

PUTNEY, S.W.—I am pleased to announce that Mr. Geo. Jones, of 9 Festing-road, has succeeded in forming a strong club for Putney. It meets in the Mission Hall every Monday night from 7.30 to 10 o'clock, when games and other indoor sports and recreations are indulged in. The club room is well supplied with papers, magazines, &c., and Mr. Jones and his comrades would be pleased to welcome as many CAPTAIN readers as care to attend, and show them the advantages of belonging to such an organisation.

KNIGHTSBRIDGE.—Mr. George Hunt and his friend, Mr. Walter Emmett, of the Grosvenor-crescent Club, Hyde Park, S.W., are desirous of forming a B.E.L. at Knightsbridge. They propose opening it with an entertainment this month, and would be pleased to hear from any CAPTAIN reader who would like to offer his services on the occasion.

B.E.L. HANDBOOK.—I am pleased to say that the B.E.L. Handbook, which has been thoroughly revised and enlarged, and partly rewritten, is now ready, and available at cost price, 3d. It contains the latest portraits of the President, the founders, the Archdeacon of London, Sir A. Conan Doyle, and others, besides all information regarding the League.

NEW ZEALAND.—The Committee have selected the beautiful "Empire Story of New Zealand" as the work for the ensuing session. It is published at 1s. 6d., but through the kindness of the publishers we are enabled to forward it to our members post free to any address for 1s. 2d.

ONE THING I LIKE about all our Colonial branches, and this is the enthusiastic manner in which the ladies join with their friends and brothers to make the B.E.L. a success. I wish our British ladies would take more of this splendid interest in them. Or is it that they do, and are only waiting to be asked to join? Although our organisation is styled the "Boys' Empire League," I would here point out that one of its most cherished rules provides that "Parents, Sisters, and other relations of members may become associates of the League on payment of the usual entrance fee." Associate membership cards have been prepared, together with special badges in the form of brooches, &c. I am rather afraid our members have not made this rule sufficiently known hitherto, and so I hasten to apologise for their shortcomings, and to offer their sisters and girl friends a hearty invitation to become Associates of the League.

B.E.L. CAMERA CLUB.—Hon. Sec., Henry J. Verrall, 47 Thornhill-place, Maidstone, Kent, would be glad to hear of any members in Maidstone and district with a view to forming a branch in Maidstone.

J. WICKENS (B.E.L. 4407) would be pleased to hear from members of B.E.L. residing in Reading, Andover, and other towns within the counties of Berks., Hants., and Wilts., for the purpose of organising a club.

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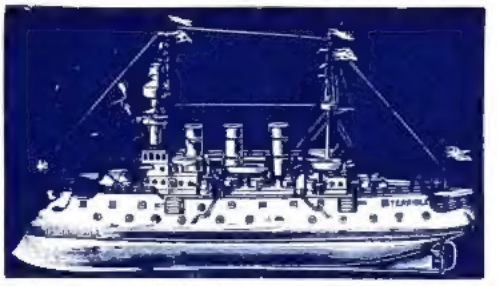

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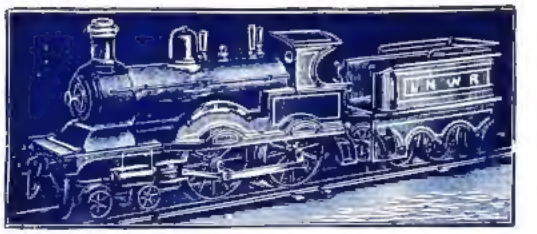

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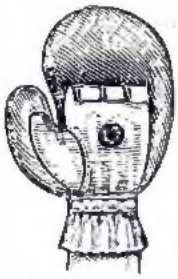

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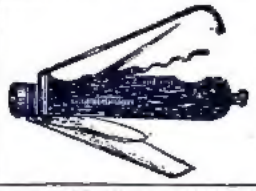

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